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BZU Demands Inquiry into Students Shooting

Bir Zeit University officials publicly called for an impartial commission January 9 to investigate the Israeli army's actions at the University November 21, which led to the shooting death of Bir Zeit engineering student Sharaf Tibi. BZU officials and lawyers from the Ramallah-based Law in the Service of Man convened a press conference at the American Colony Hotel in Jerusalem to make the appeal and to release their own investigative findings.

BZU Vice President Gabi Baramki, university attorney Raja Shehadeh, Associate professor of English Leighton Pratt, and Hebrew University lecturer of Criminology Stan Cohen spoke at the conference. They charged that the army unconscionably and illegally obstructed the transfer of the wounded to hospital and used heavy gunfire against studentdemonstrators as a means of first resort without any warning.

Gabi Baramki said: "I understand the army's actions on November 21 as illegal. I understand these actions also as inhuman and immoral. I do not as yet understand that orders might be given, or what malice might be felt, to delay a dying youth from receiving medical treatment."

Baramki hopes that Bir Zeit's published report, entitled *No Mercy*, which outlines events of November 21 1984 at Bir Zeit University, would encourage serious scrutiny of the army's actions.

Raja Shehadeh, co-director of Law in the Service of Man, pointed to the strong evidence in the report against the military authorities' version of events that day and their use of the "security norm" as an excuse. "It is very difficult to justify methodical use of live bullets against unarmed civilians," he said. He concluded that there has been a serious escalation in the use of military force against residents. Shehadeh also referred to stopping the vehicles transporting wounded students as evidence ofa violation of the Geneva conventions. He said that this matter must be officially investigated.

Leighton Pratt said he witnessed the shooting episode. He said soldiers arrived at 10:30 am and immediately began firing on a crowd of some 200 students gathered in the streets of the old campus. He observed one soldier firing on students at a distance of over 200 metres using a telescopic sight.

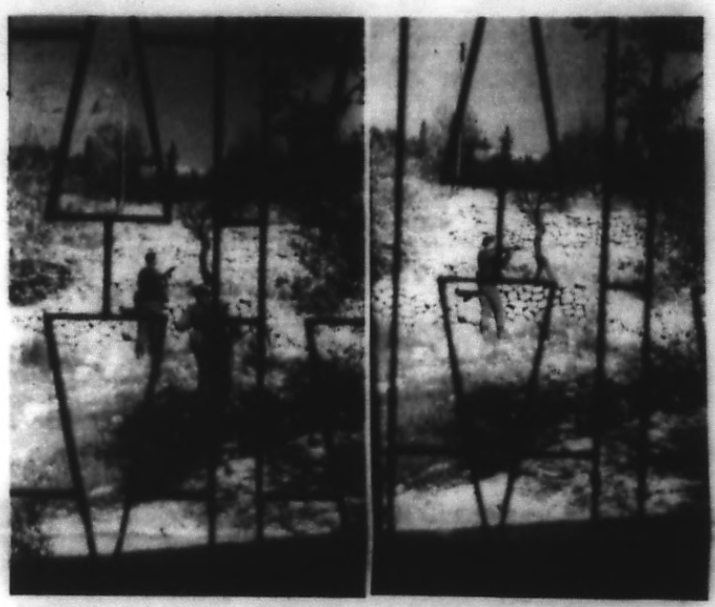
Pratt reported that he saw a light coloured medium-sized car with yellow plates and occupants in civilian dress inside parked near the entrance to Bir Zeit town. He noted that after a jeep stopped at the car, a soldier got out and talked to the occupants of the car. Then one or two people got out of the car, "a pink piece of paper was produced," placed on the bonnet of the car and signed.

Pratt said the Israel Radio reports quoted on a BBC broadcast November 21 were blatantly false. An Israeli military spokesman was quoted as saying that the soldiers fired live ammunition to "extricate themselves from a dangeroussituation." Pratt asserted "no tear gas grenades and no warning shots were fired in the air before the soldiers, who were in no danger themselves, began shooting at students with the intent to kill." Pratt said that an official investigation into the matter must be conducted.

Criminology Professor Stan Cohen delivered a short address in which he stated his support for Bir Zeit University.

In response to questions, the speakers explained that they have no power to investigate Israeli policy themselves. They cannot question soldiers or review the order issued by the military commander. "It is the power of an official commission of investigation that must be established," they said.

The Bir Zeit University's detailed and documented account of the killing of one of its students, Sharaf Tibi, affirmed that soldiers delayed the private car transporting the wounded young man for a full 25 minutes at an army checkpoint near Jifna village. Soldiers also delayed the ambulance on its way to the university from Maqassed Hospital for one hour. "As a result," the reports said, "when the ambulance finally arrived at BZ's clinics, no wounded students remained." The Ramallah government hospital ambulance was also stopped at an army checkpoint and forced to return to the Ramallah police station. There, after a delay of more than half an hour, it proceeded to Bir Zeit with an escort — only to encounter another delay at an army checkpoint while it was transporting two injured students.



Israeli soldiers load their guns.... and take direct aim at demonstrators. *These photos shot by a BZU faculty member November 21 indicate that soldiers who dispersed a demonstration that day were neither in danger nor shooting into the air. Their live ammunition killed Sharaf Tibi. Courtesy of BZU public relations office.*

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Disillusioned Golan Druze Give Up Israeli Citizenship

Golan Druze residents who obtained Israeli citizenship after Israel's formal annexation of the Syrian territory in 1982 have recently turned in their Israeli legal papers and declared regret at giving up their Syrian nationality. The trend, reported by Israeli media, was confirmed by Salman Natour, a member of the Haifa-based Committee in Solidarity with Golan Residents. Natour said "dozens" of Golan residents turned in their Israeli IDs including four prominent figures: Shafiq Abu Salah (Majdal Shams), Tawfiq Abu Musa, Mohammed Abu Shahin and Farhan Farhat, all from Boqata.

The 200 Golan Heights residents who had accepted Israeli IDs were under complete social and religious boycott by the 13,000 other residents who refused to accept Israeli citizenship and maintained loyalty to their native Syria.

According to Natour, the political return of the residents is a "victory for the progressive forces inside the Druze community which insist on rejecting zionist infiltration of their cultureand society." Natour explained that most people who accepted citizenship did so thinking their economic well-being would improve. "They were mistaken," said Natour.

"In fact; these 200 individuals have suffered many hardships since they obtained Israeli citizenship," according to Natour. The Druze clergy excommunicated them from the Druze religion and the community boycotted their businesses and homes. "They were considered traitors by their fellow countrymen," he said.

Moreover, the 200 residents did not receive the "special economic benefits" promised them by the Israeli government in return for giving up their Syrian citizenship. According to Jamal Maady, head of the Druze Initiative Committee, "They got only empty promises."

On the other hand, those who refused Israeli citizenship were punished for their decision, Maady explained. "The Israeli government harassed them in several ways. It imposed unreasonably high taxes on them, it refused to grant business licenses, and it even closed some businesses." The harassment produced opposite results from those intended. Both Natoor and Maady predicted that all 200 people involved will give up Israeli citizenship within the next few weeks.

Ethiopian Jews protesting outside the Knesset

Storm Breaks Over "Operation Moses:"

Israelis' Palestinians Question the Airlift of 12,500 Ethiopian Jews

Israeli officials in the Jewish Agency acknowledged January 3 that thousands of Jews from famine-threatened Ethiopia have been airlifted to Israel in a transfer named "Operation Moses." Akiva Levinsky, acting chairman of the Jewish Agency which coordinates immigration of Jews to Israel, said that at least 10,000 Ethiopian Jews had already arrived in Israel. News reports disclosed that about 7000 Ethiopian Jews have been airlifted to Israel by the Jewish Agency since November, bringing the total to 12,500. The United States was heavily involved in financing and facilitating the operation.

A source in Brussels reported that the Belgian airline "Trans European Airways" flew thousands of Ethiopian Jews from the Sudanese capital Khartoum to Israel via Brussels.

Israeli officials responded angrily to publicity leaks and expressed fears that the operation might be halted. [The Belgian Airline announced January 5 that its shuttle had flown its final flight and could not continue due to the massive flood of publicity that broke when Israel lifted the military censorship ban on the subject January 3. US officials were reportedly shocked and angered by Israel's surprise lifting of censorship. The *Jerusalem Post* reported that some American officials suspected the story might have been leaked deliberately, but they remained in the dark as to why.

The Jerusalem Post also reported that the Ethiopians were bitter about the operation's halting, as a result of which many families have been split. Ten percent of the children have arrived without their parents. A group of Ethiopian Jews gathered January 8 to demonstrate outside the Knesset. Workneh Tesfa, one of the leaders of the year-old Association of Ethiopian immigrants, told *The Jerusalem Post*: "This is the first time that such a secret has been leaked in Israel. They probably thought that what we have here [in Israel] is enough." Tesfa was implying that immigrants felt the government had wanted to stop the operation.

The airlifting of Ethiopian Jews, residents of northwest Ethiopian mountains for thousands of years, raised questions among Israelis as well as Palestinians.

Israelis questioned the imposition of *halachic* Jewish rule on the new immigrants to whom it is totally alien. Their tradition of Judaism does not include an oral Torah or Talmud, and differs in many respects from that observed in Israel. Their divorce proceduresare considered unorthodox, which renders the entire community potential *mamzerim*, or bastards. Israelis protested the Rabbinical ruling that unless the newcomers undergo conversion procedures of ritual immersion and symbolic circumcision, they and all their future offspring will be labelled *mamzerim* and forbidden to marry in Israel. The new immigrants have vehemently objected to these procedures because they imply that they are not true Jews.

Palestinians reacted to the news by condemning Sudan for its cooperation with the airlift, which allows thousands of Ethiopian Jews to receive citizenship and full rights within 24 hours — rights which four million Palestinians under occupation and in the diaspora can never hope to receive from the Jewish state. They also questioned Israel's motives for bringing in the immigrants, some of whom have been placed in absorption centres in West Bank settlements.

The PLO issued a statement in Aden January 5 blaming the Sudanese regime for conspiring with Israel. The PLO demanded that Arab countries interfere to pressure Sudan to stop providing facilities for the transfer of Ethiopian Jews to Israel. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine also distributed a statement in Damascus strongly condemning Sudan. The statement said Sudan's involvement in the operation violates Arab summit resolutions. The statement called on the Ethiopian government to investigate the issue and to ascertain Sudan's role in the operation.

The Ethiopian government has accused Sudan of interference and denied any involvement in the affair. At the same time, Sudan issued a statement claiming non-involvement in the transport of the Ethiopians.

Palestinians in the occupied territories, and inside Israel received the news of the selective airlift with incredulity and resentment. Local personalities and political figures expressed the belief that the newcomers would be placed in West Bank settlements.

Faisal Husseini, Director of the Arab Studies Institute in Jerusalem, told *Al Fajr*, "More Palestinian suffering will be the outcome of this operation. The Ethiopian Jews will also encounter difficult conditions and persecution in Israel. We wonder why Sudan participated in such an anti-Palestinian operation. A greater justice would be for Palestinian refugees to be absorbed in their original towns and villages. It is a triple error made by Sudan," Husseini said.

Mansour Kardoush, a Palestinian nationalist in Nazareth, condemned Sudan. "It is the same action made by the Iraqi regime in the 1950s. This action complicated the Palestinian problem. The problem of hunger in Ethiopia must not be solved at the expense of the Palestinian people. Sudan's action gives the Arab masses an important indication of the degree of political decline it has reached."

Rashid Salim, head of the Arab branch administration of the Progressive list for Peace (PLP), told *Al Fajr*: "The operation is more political than humanitarian. I support the return of Palestinians as well as Israelis, therefore I demand a change in the Law of Return to make it applicable to Palestinians as well."

MK Mattitiyahu Peled from the PLP called the transfer "a very humanitarian act to save lives of Jews from the terrible famine in Ethiopia. It is an effort.... to save the lives of unfortunate people." Asked about the political consequences of this action, Peled reacted: "The emphasis is on the human aspects."

Kahane Sends Threat Letters to Local Palestinians

"Leave — or face catastrophe" said hundreds of letters stamped with the Israeli Knesset logo which prominent Palestinian figures throughout the country received last week. The letters were signed by MK Meir Kahane, head of the ultra-right Kach movement. Hundreds of Arab residents inside the green line and in the West Bank, all apparently chosen at random, also received letters.

"This is the Land of Israel and one day Kach will rule," said one letter. "If you leave now, Kach will be delighted to relocate you in the country of your choice. We will even arrange residency and employment for you there," said another. The letters, according to the local press, caused dismay and anxiety among the recipients. Residents of Nazareth, Jericho, Bethlehem and Jerusalem were targeted by Kahane.

A Kach movement spokesperson told *Al Fajr* that the letters were not meant as threats but merely as "invitations to leave." When asked where Kach expects them to go, the spokesperson replied, "to Arab countries of course. That is where they belong. ' The spokesperson admitted, however, that Kach will not be able to arrange residency and employment in Arab countries for departing Palestinians. She suggested instead that "their Arab brethren should do that for Kach." The member also alleged that Kach's headquarters have been "flooded with letters in response from Palestinians wishing to leave." She refused to elaborate.

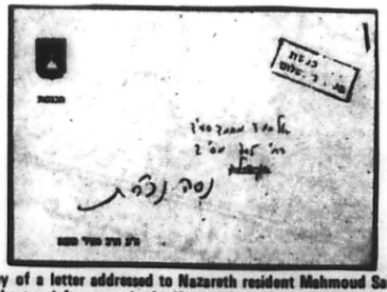
Elias Freij, mayor of Bethlehem, was one of the targets of Kahane's letter campaign. So was Dr Mahmoud Abu Lafi, a prominent Jerusalem physician and real-estate developer. Friej was told in the letter to "pack your things and leave the West Bank." Abu Lafi was told that "Kach will soon rule so you had better leave now." Both letters were written in Hebrew and sent through the Knesset mailing system. Freij's immediate reaction was to send a telegramme to the Israeli government to protest Kahane's incitement.

Freij told *Al Fajr* that this threat campaign could have dangerous side effects since Kahane, who speaks on behalf of a large group of followers, aims to create disturbances between Arabs and Jews based on racial hatred and to intimidate Palestinians into leaving the country. Freij wondered how "a man of unknown origin" dared demand that Palestinians who have resided here for many generations leave their homeland.

Abu Lafi told *Al Fajr* that he is deeply concerned about the threat letters, that he is shocked by the rude language Kahane used in his letter, and that he does not understand how the Israeli government allowed such "hate propaganda" to be sent through its parliament. Abu Lafi suggested sarcastically that an Arab committee should be formed to collect funds for the purpose of relocating Kahane and his gang somewhere else."

Nazareth advocate Aziz Shehadeh, representing several of the dozens of Nazareth residents who received threat letters, sent a letter to Knesset Speaker Shlomo Hillel protesting Kahane's deliberate racism. Shehadeh also demanded that public incitement be halted by Knesset legislation. Israeli laws do not prohibit political figures from issuing racist propaganda.

Kahane, who has dual American-Israeli citizenship, has been a very controversial figure in Israeli politics. He has repeatedly expressed his wish that Palestinian residents of Israel and the occupied territories would emigrate to other regions of the world. He lead his extreme right-wing faction Kach into winning a Knesset seat in the last Israeli elections in July, 1984. He has since attempted to pay highly controversial visits to Arab villages in northern Israel to deliver the same message as that of the letters — that all Arabs should leave the Jewish state. This resulted in a Knesset vote December 25 to restrict the freedom of movement granted him by parliamentary immunity. Now that his mobility has been curtailed and his visits to Arab villages have failed, Kahane has decided to try his luck through the postal system.



Copy of a letter addressed to Nazareth resident Mahmoud Said. In the top left corner is the Knesset logo; in the bottom left is Meir Kahane. The inflammatory messages were sent through Knesset mails.

Fatah's twentieth anniversary commemorated in West Bank, Top: *Students gather for celebrations at Hebron U.* **Bottom:** *Students at Bir Zeit wear hatas and cary flags.*

WB Universities Celebrate Fatah Anniversary; Youth Wounded

West Bank students marked the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Palestinian revolution by organising large festivals at Bethlehem, Bir Zeit, Najah and Hebron universities January 3 7. Israeli soldiers set up checkposts at university entrances and checked student IDs. One youth from Dura was shot at a Bethlehem roadblock when he ran away from soldiers.

Large numbers of Israeli troops were sent to the Bethlehem area January 3 because of the student celebrations at Bethlehem University.

Bethlehem University

Hundreds of students from universities, camps and institutions attended the festival. The Palestinian flag was displayed in the hall and the Palestinian national anthem was played. After one moment of silence to honour martyrs, 20 candles — one for each year of the revolution — were kindled.

Representatives of student movements from the various academic institutions spoke on several topics related to the Palestinian revolution. They also eulogised PLO Executive Committee member Fahd Qawasmeh who was assassinated in Amman December 29. The festival included a performance of *dabkeh* and Palestinian songs. The Dalal Mughrabi group, the Feda group, and youth committees from West Bank towns and refugee camps sang about the revolution.

Many students were prevented from entering the campus. After the three-hour festival dispersed, Israeli soldiers stopped students and arrested eight women. The women were taken to the military headquarters in Bethlehem and charged with incitement and participation in an illegal festival. However, pressure from the university administration led to their release on IS25,000 bail, at 10:00 pm.

Nearby, soldiers opened fire on residents walking along the Jerusalem-Hebron road January 3. Israel Radio reported that a number of soldiers stationed near Bethlehem University ordered four Palestinians to stop for ID checks but the youths ran away. The soldiers responded by shooting at them and chasing them. One of the four, a youth from the village of Dura in the Hebron district, was wounded in the leg. He was given treatment at Hussein Hospital and released. Israel Radio reported that the youth was among four passersby "who refused to comply with Israeli soldiers' orders to stop." "One was injured and three were arrested" the radio reported.

Bir Zeit University

In Nablus and Bir Zeit students from Najah and Bir Zeit universities organised similar festivals on their campuses January 6. Representatives of student youth movements, womens' movements, and workers' youth movements delivered speeches related to current political developments.

The speakers called for the preservation of Palestinian national unity. They dismissed the notion of serious splits and called for national reconciliation through the legitimate channels of the Palestinian revolution. The speakers affirmed their support for PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir Arafat. They also attacked all Arab parties who deviate from independent Palestinian decision making. Representatives of national institutions, clubs and unions also delivered speeches. "Fatah is the backbone of the Palestinian revolution — Fatah is the revolution!" said a representative of Bir Zeit University student youth movement in his enthusiastic address to hundreds of participants at the old campus.

Najah University

At Najah, soldiers set up roadblocks and prevented anyone without a university ID from entering the campus. The celebration took place in a central courtyard crisscrossed by hundreds of small flags hung on strings. The dramatic highlight of the day came when about 20 students simulated a small army wearing red, black, green and white shirts with *hattas* completely covering their faces. They marched around the hall behind their leader who bore the Palestinian flag while some 300 spectators looked on. They later returned carrying burning torches, stamping their feet and chanting.

At Hebron

In Hebron, students from Hebron University and the Polytechnic Vocational Centre organised a similar festival January 7 at the university. Representatives of various blocs delivered speeches related to the birth of the Palestinian revolution. "It is a nail in the coffin of imperialism," said one speaker. Hundreds of attendants sang national songs praising Palestinian martyrs. A representative from the Palestinian-Danish friendship delegation delivered a speech in support of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. The "martyr Amer Salameh," "Jazoor," and "Dheisheh camp" groups performed the *dabkeh*. The "martyr Majed Abu Sharar group" and two groups from Hebron University sang national songs. Photos of Yasir Arafat and Fahd Qawasmeh and Palestinian flags were hung in the hall. The celebration lasted five hours.

Army and police stand by

Thugs Rampage Dheisheh Camp

More than 40 hired thugs rampaged through Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem January 7 stoning houses and throwing molotov cocktail bombs at random. Several homes were damaged as a result, including that of Palestinian journalist Hamdi Farraj who is currently under town arrest in the camp. The open attack followed recent clashes between camp residents and village league members who collaborate with the Israeli military.

Last week Dheisheh resident Khalid Abu Ajamieh was attacked and seriously wounded by a village league member wielding a metal bar. The league member, also a resident of the camp, is a known criminal. Well-informed sources said the attacker was earlier arrested on charges of breaking into and robbing a jewelry store in neighbouring Beit Jala. The man was released only 24 hours later, however, after Israeli military officers intervened on his behalf.

Local sources also reported that an Israeli secret service officer visited the attacker at his home the night before the rampage. They charged the officer must have seen molotov bombs being prepared in the house, yet he did nothing to stop the imminent attack.

The gangsters, most of whom came from outside the camp, began their rampage at the home of Farraj and then moved to attack neighbouring residents with rockets and petrol bombs. Once word spread, youths from the camp launched defensive action. They pelted the thugs with rocks and were able to pin them into a corner of the camp. The attackers were saved by Israeli police who intervened on their behalf. The police had earlier stopped an Israeli army convoy from entering the camp to stop the initial attack. The police then appeared only after the gangsters were hard-pressed by camp youth and unable to continue with their destruction.

Camp residents held the Israeli military authorities responsible for the attack and accused them of covering up for the local criminals who cooperate with the military. They said the attack and many other incidents against Dheisheh camp and its residents are intentionally planned with the cooperation and knowledge of the military government in order to frighten refugees into leaving their homes. Israeli settlers, led by militant Rabbi Moshe Levinger, have been pressuring the government to evacuate the camp and turn the area over to the settlers to establish an Israeli settlement. Dheisheh camp houses 10,000 refugees from destroyed villages within the 1948 borders of Israel. (Translation: Al Ittihad, and Al Fajr, January 9)

Salaries for Striking Employees Halted

Nablus municipal employees sent a letter to the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee in late December 1984 protesting the cessation of salary payments to workers who have struck against the Israeli civil administration since its establishment in 1982. More than 1000 employees in Nablus, al-Bireh and Ramallah have been receiving their monthly salaries from the Amman-based Joint Committee. Jordan decided last August to stop payments but within one month rescinded the decision after massive protest from municipal employees and West Bank mayors.

Only 250 out of 800 Nablus municipal employees received their November salaries; none have yet received their December salaries. Al-Bireh's 97 municipal employees were notified that their December salary would be their last one.

The letter said: "We supported the municipal council's decision to boycott the civil administration and to continue offering essential services like water, electricity, health and fire-fighting." It continued that the problems that originally triggered the strike remain unresolved. Nablus workers and employees appealed to the Joint Committee to cancel the decision.

Bassam Shaka'a, the elected mayor of Nablus, told *Al Fajr*, "Stopping the salaries is a negative and harmful step. It helps the occupation and facilitates the illegal and illegitimate presence of the civil administration. I reject this procedure on national, moral and administrative grounds."

Last month a similar letter signed by the mayors of Nablus, Ramallah, al-Bireh and Jenin was sent to the Joint Committee. The letter described the decision as "arbitrary." Shaka'a said, "There is no doubt that this decision is a political one aimed at weakening Palestinian national will to prepare the area for administrative political solutions."

Shaka'a explained that the Israeli-appointed municipality in Nablus attempted to break the local strike by employing collaborators to replace them and exerting pressure on some employees. "Those who cooperated with the civil administration, even on a temporary basis, received no salary," Shaka'a said.

Salim Bast, a librarian at al-Bireh's municipal library, told *Al Fajr*: "The issue of municipalities has not yet been resolved. The municipal employees originally went on strike for political reasons. This move will seriously harm many workers who depend solely on their salaries for their livelihood."

Arab Americans Join Front Lines in Apartheid Protests

Washington D.C. — The 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, given to Bishop Tutu of South Africa, has focused attention here in the United States on the racist policies of that regime. Continuous demonstrations and protests have been held in front of the South African embassy against that regime, and many Americans have been arrested. These demonstrations began November 21, 1984. They were organised by the Free South Africa Movement with the aim of dramatising the case against the role of the minority in South Africa. Organisers of the Free South Africa Movement, according to news reports, will further intensify their protests in order to bring their issue to the attention of the 99th Congress, which began its term January third.

The sudden outburst of intense protests against South Africa's policy of apartheid have spread beyond Washington DC. About 100 people throughout the country have been arrested. The arrests took place in both New York City and Washington, DC because protesters marched within 500 feet of the South African embassy, a range considered illegal for demonstrations in front of embassies. According to the *Washington Post*, 31 people were arrested January 2 in Washington DC and about 22 in New York for violating the "500 feet" rule. Among those arrested were prominent Americans like Representative Mervyn M. Dymally, Democrat, of California. Dymally was released without charges because of congressional immunity. Also arrested were the dean of Columbia University's school of journalism and the vice president of the American Federation of Government Employees. Some protesters have avoided arrest like Representative Mary Rose Oakar, a Democrat from Ohio whose parents are of Arab origin, and Carlos Romero-Barcelo, governor of Puerto Rico.

Arab Americans were very active in the protests and were among those arrested including the national chairperson of the

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. Former Democratic Senator from South Dakota James Abourezk and Omar Kader, the new executive director of the ADC, were arrested in front of the South African embassy in Washington DC on December 12.

In an ADC press release December 14, Abourezk outlined three reasons why he and other Arab Americans joined the protests. "We must protest the policies of apartheid and the jailing of South African dissidents,... oppose the nuclear, military and economic alliance between South Africa and Israel [and] stand in solidarity with black Americans who have stood with us in our struggle." Abourezk pointed to similarities between the treatment Lebanese and Palestinians receive from Israel and that which blacks in South Africa receive from the minority white regime.

In the ADC press release, Kader reaffirmed ADC's commitment to continue the "fight against apartheid to the end." He called on all US citizens "to speak out against this evil system which has no place in 20th century society." He also drew an analogy between South African and Israeli policies toward their respective indigenous populations. Kader concluded by saying that Palestinians who have also experienced discrimination, Arabs and the ADC can't but "join the struggle against oppression in South Africa."

Jabalya Centre Set on Fire in Protests Over UNRWA Cuts

The Jabalya refugee camp UNRWA supplies centre in Gaza was set afire late January 5 as protests continued throughout the Israeli-occupied territories against a decision by the agency to introduce budget cuts.

Jabalya residents held sit-ins at the agency's supplies centre over the past week demanding that rations allocated to them by the international organisation be reinstated. Following the Lebanon war of 1982, UNRWA cut rations for more than 80 percent of Palestinian refugees. Only ten percent of the refugees in the Gaza Strip are still receiving relief aid. Flour and other food supplies were stolen from the vandalised centre in Jabalya.

Al Mithaq Arabic daily January 6 quoted "informed sources" as saying that UNRWA "will take harsh and retaliatory measures against Jabalya camp residents, including the cessation of all rations for several months." The newspaper reported January 9 that Jabalya refugees protested the arson and asked local nationalist institutions to support their demand to receive their monthly food rations. Refugees requested that the supplies centre — which was moved to Gaza City following the theft — be returned to Jabalya, the paper said.

At the West Bank refugee camp of Dheisheh, teachers at UNRWA schools received R.L. Hopkins, director of personnel at UNRWA's Vienna headquarters, with demonstrations protesting the recent UNRWA cuts. Hopkins was on a tour of the West Bank refugee camps. The teachers met with Hopkins for 30 minutes during which time they informed him of their demands, including annual salary raises for employees and resumption of rations distribution to all refugees.

UNRWA officials told *Al Fajr* the cuts will not include services. They accused employees of stirring up refugees by mixing administrative cuts with services in order to increase pressure on headquarters and force it to rescind its decisions. UNRWA said the measures may be temporary or they may not be applied at all, depending on the final budget deficit, projected to reach US$60 million.

Directors of UNRWA operations in the Middle East met in Vienna the middle of last week to discuss the recent measures and the wave of protests that has swept the occupied territories. An UNRWA press release January 9 quoted Commissioner-General Olof Rydbeck as saying: "The next step is to find ways of reducing UNRWA expenditure in the Middle East without affecting services to the refugees. If the next round of cuts is not sufficient to bridge the remaining gap, I will then make a special appeal to governments for aid to maintain services at their current level." The Arabic *Al Mithaq* daily reported January 9 that the director of UNRWA operations in Gaza will present the Jabalya refugees' demands to the organisation's comissioner-general during their meeting in Vienna.

Meanwhile, UNRWA employees in the West Bank continued meeting to discuss means of fighting the agency's measures. The employees have rejected any cuts in personnel, work benefits or services, complaining that these measures coincide with a period of acute economic hardship here. Employees also accused UNRWA management of acquiescing in what they called the "Western camp's" plan to liquidate the Palestinian refugee problem in order to arrive at a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict unfavorable to Palestinians.

BZU Stands by Israeli Refusenik from Hebrew U.

In a statement termed "an open letter" aimed at the academic community here and abroad, the administration of Bir Zeit University announced January 7 its solidarity with Israeli professor Dani Amit, imprisoned last month for refusing to serve in Lebanon. The letter, the first of its kind from BZU, strongly supported the professor's stand and urged other Israeli citizens to follow suit.

Dr Amit, a Hebrew University physicist, was sentenced to one month in prison for refusing to do military reserve duty in Lebanon on political grounds. Israeli law allows such refusal only on health or religious grounds.

The open letter stated that, "We take this opportunity to strongly support Amit's own freedom of thought and his right not to serve in an unjust war and an illegal occupation." Amit is an active member in the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University and joined protest demonstrations against the frequent Israeli closures of BZU in the past.

Albert Aghazarian, head of the public relations office at the university, told *Al Fajr* that the move is a way of saying "thank you to Amit who stood by us for such a long time and also to demonstrate support for any Israeli citizen who refuses to fight in Lebanon."

The letter said that "the actions of Professor Amit and those of others who have taken similar stands encourage the cause of peace and justice in our war-torn area, where so much injustice has and continues to be endured."

Bir Zeit University has issued numerous letters concerning closures and frequent clashes over the university's affairs with the military in the past. This letter is the first to express solidarity with an Israeli resister, however, and, according to Aghazarian, it will not necessarily be the last.

Commercial Centre Planned for Cemetery Site

The General Islamic Committee in Haifa issued a statement January 7 strongly denouncing the Israeli-appointed *waqf* authorities' plan to establish a commerical centre on a six-dunum lot of the Islamic *Istiqlal* (Independence) cemetery. The cemetery was bulldozed by Israeli authorities June 6, 1981. Muslims were told at the time that Israeli authorities plan to construct a housing project for Haifa's Muslim community. The General Islamic Committee has been warning of Israeli schemes to transform the cemetery into a commercial centre since 1981.

The committee issued the statement in response to a report published in a Haifa-based Hebrew newspaper December 21, 1984, quoting Erfan Abu Hamad, head of the Israeli-appointed *waqf* directors' committee, about the decision to build a commercial centre.

The statement said: "The announcement of the commercial centre is clear evidence of the real intentions behind demolishing the cemetery... It is a serious and dangerous step which gravely harms Muslim religious feelings. We appeal to judges, Islamic *waqf* directors and board of trustee members not to cooperate or permit authorities to construct the commercial centre. The land of the cemetery is full of the skeletal remains of our ancestors. Respect the human remains, refence and close the cemetery."

In 1981 the Israelis had destroyed the cemetery on the pretext of building a project for the benefit of the community — 72 housing units, seven shops, a school, a club for Muslim youth, a kindergarten, an assembly and an orphanage were planned. However, the cost to a family wanting to participate in the housing centre was estimated at US$30,000.

Fathi Forani, head of the General Islamic Committe, listed the demands of Haifa's Arab population in the Haifa-based daily *al Ittihad* January 6: to boycott the directors' committee — which is directly responsible for the cemetery's demolition; to form a popular investigative committee to probe the secret deals made against the population; to reconstruct, re-fence and maintain the cemetery; and to hold elections among the Arab population to elect new local *waqf* directors.

Haifa woman overlooking cemetery were her relatives are buried

The Dawn
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Magic Carpet Ride

The airlift of 7000 Ethiopian Jews from their drought-stricken native country to Israel bears little sign of being a humanitarian gesture on the part of the Zionist state. Two months after Israel began secretly "importing" the Ethiopians via Sudan, it blew the cover off the operation, halting the transfer of any more famine victims.

We have little information about who was chosen for Israel's " "Operation Moses," but obviously many starving Ethiopians did not qualify. The majority population of Christians and Moslems, who live in the most severely affected regions, did not pass the first requirement – that of religion.

We do know something of their treatment once their "Magic Carpet" landed. All of the children, ten percent of whom had arrived without their parents, were herded off to Youth *Aliya* centres for immediate "assimilation" procedures. The adults were purposely scattered, one Israeli assimilation expert said on Israel Radio, to many immigration depots throughout the country and to at least one West Bank settlement – Kiryat Arba. This isolation was to facilitate their learning the trappings of Israeli society: the Hebrew language Jewish Halachic laws, how to use refrigerators – and above all how not to be a disruptive ethnic group with no appreciation of Western consumer life.

The Ethiopians have learned other new things as well. Their presence will exacerbate many of Israel's major internal problems: a continually dipping economy and growing unemployment (whose jobs will the Ethiopian newcomers take?); rising racism (which Palestinians and Sephardim have long experienced and interpreted by one Israeli 'expert' as ' only an anti-black prejudice");religious fanaticism (the Ethiopians are being accused of unorthodox, and therefore un-Jewish traditions); and cultural disrespect (already the word "primitive" is being heard everywhere).

Palestinians see other sinister aspects in the plight of the Ethiopian Jews. Israel's rather cavalier transfer of whole populations to advance its interests is a policy well-known to Palestinians. They feel the Israeli description of the Ethiopians as being well-suited to perform "honest work at low wages" indicates they will become a Hebrew labour pool to substitute for Palestinian labour. Other fears are that the youthful Ethiopians will be molded into faithful soldiers. Palestinians are certain that little good will come out of this transfer for their Ethiopian brothers and sisters. They will continue to be treated as a political commodity, a hedge against outside charges of racism, a human wedge in the West Bank, inside Israel and perhaps even in South Lebanon.

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Book Review

West Bank Settlements - A Prescription for Conflict

by Ida Audeh

Prescription for Conflict: Israel's West Bank Settlement Policy.
Merle Thorpe, Jr
Washington, D.C.: Foundation for Middle East Peace, 1984. 182pp.
Forward by Amnon Kapeliuk, Introduction by Simha Flapan.

> "In its 16th year the occupation looks more permanent than ever. Every passing day brings us nearer to an apartheid state. The only wonder is that many are still affronted, quite genuinely, when you say that. 'This is not apartheid, it is security,' they say, or 'Let the Arabs agree to autonomy.' But people who speak this way have usually not troubled to read what we actually offered to the Arabs in the autonomy proposal — even less than the South Africans have accorded to their Bantustans..." (Amos Elon, Israeli journalist and writer)

To West Bankers, it has long been axiomatic that the Israeli rush to establish Jewish settlements in the occupied territories ("creating facts" in Israeli governmental parlance) guarantees that a just resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will become impossible to reach. A growing number of Israelis share that view.

The author, Merle Thorpe Jr, has more than a casual interest in the Middle East. He has visited the region and has written *Path to Peace* and *West Bank: Hostage of History*. He also founded and served as president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, a non-profit corporation which seeks to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by giving grants within the Arab and Jewish communities for research to further this purpose. His most recent work is a basic introduction to the controversial issue of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, which every US administration prior to the current one termed illegal and obstacles to peace.

While by no means comprehensive, this book is as useful an introduction to the subject as any (although one might wish the author had included a bibliography for the reader who wishes to pursue the subject). It reads easily — the short chapters hardly tax the reader's concentration — and provides an impartial presentation of facts gathered from a variety of sources generally unavailable to the average American reader, such as excerpts from the Hebrew press and Meron Benvenisti's *The West Bank and Gaza Data Base Project Pilot Study Report*, an invaluable resource for any serious study of the occupied territories. Enlarged maps detailing Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are especially helpful. However, one wishes the author had indicated when the settlement maps were drawn, since the Israeli government's eagerness to "create facts" quickly renders maps out-dated. The 73 settlements indicated on these maps have doubtless increased in number between the time the author wrote this manuscript and the date of publication. Israeli journalist Amnon Kapeliuk begins his 'Forward' by asserting that "The Israeli settlements on the West Bank are among the principal obstacles to the resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict — particularly the Israeli-Palestinian question." Demolishing the rhetoric which claims that such settlements are harmless and even conducive to coexistence, he argues that they are illegal, populated by some of the most racist and lawless elements in Israeli society, and counterproductive. The purpose of *Prescription for Conflict* is to make the American public aware of the inherent dangers of Israel's

settlement policy.

Although Thorpe does not provide more than 3 pages of historical background, Simha Flapan's introduction, in part, attempts to place the issue of settlements in a historical context. He argues that the majority of Zionist leaders prior to 1948 wanted both to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and to guarantee the rights of Palestinians. Flapan does not discuss the incompatibility of these aims, and his selection of quotations from major leaders is unrepresentative because it overlooks statements uttered by these same leaders in more candid moments, admitting that ultimately the native population must be driven out of Palestine.

The 60-page "photo essay" (chapter four) provides pictures of settlement sites, dispossessed families and general scenes of daily life under Israeli occupation. Stark images of Israeli patrols in bustling Palestinian marketplaces and barbed wire enclosing newly confiscated property are juxtaposed with quotations from Israeli politicians, journalists and American Jews, all of whom question the logic and morality of the continuing occupation. For example:

> "Perhaps the worst sign [that] an ill wind is blowing against the direction of the Zionist vision, is that it is becoming hard to distinguish between the lunatic fringe and the mainstream of our political life..." (MK Amnon Rubenstein, p.50)

> "If we were to hear that some people in Holland were eager to incorporate 4 million Germans into their country against their will, we would conclude not that the proposers of that idea were patriots, but that they were demented. Yet the idea that Israel can permanently impose its authority over a foreign population which constitutes 30 percent of its own size is solemnly put forward as if it were a rational alternative."(MK Abba Eban, former foreign minister, p.42)

In Chapter 5, Thorpe briefly outlines Israeli opposition to the settlement drive and argues that unconditional US support of Israel encourages the adoption of counterproductive Israeli policies. Since this aid is unsupervised, it is frequently spent on the very settlement policy of which the United States officially disapproves. For example, the Israeli response to the Reagan Plan (and its call for a settlement freeze) was the dedication of Ma'ale Adumim.

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AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request

The Spectre of Israeli Extremism

by Prof. Dan Horowitz

Israel is ripe for fascism. The current congruence of tribal nationalism, religious fanaticism and right-wing populism has laid the political foundations for Israeli fascism. Candidates for the role of "leader" are not wanting; Arik Sharon, Rafui Eitan and Meir Kahane all aspire to that role. But the country's current social situation is perhaps the foremost factor making such a development a distinct possibility. The public, hit by rampant inflation, feels trapped in a situation over which it has little control; jobs are no longer secure and savings are no longer safe. Many people have lost faith in the ability of Israel's democratic-parliamentary system to govern the country. Anti-Arab hatred is on the rise. The political and cultural life of the country has deteriorated and the social elites have become estranged from the mainstream.

Rampant inflation breeds uncertainty and anxiety. So far, Israel has managed to blunt the social impact of inflation by a system whereby wages are linked to the price index. However, it seems that a crisis cannot be avoided if the country is forced into recession and mass unemployment in order to escape the present inflationary situation. It is not uncommon for a public, hit by falling wages and the erosion of its savings and job security, to turn into a mob. Anxiety creates the demand for undemocratic leaders; the mob seeks a charismatic leader to bolster its self-confidence and the establishment seeks "a strong man" to "impose law and order."

Intercommunal Dimension

Public attitudes to the Israeli-Arab conflict are oiling the wheels of fascism. The dominant attitude to the conflict has undergone a transformation over the past few years. During the Begin and Shamir governments, the public's attention shifted from the threat posed by the armies of the Arab countries to the marginal threat of Palestinian terrorism. This psychological shift is reflected by an ideological change as well. Ben Gurion's legacy was to have transformed a conflict between communities into one between states. But the ideology promulgated by adherents of Eretz Yisrael, the Greater Land of Israel, invested the conflict with an intercommunal dimension. This development followed Israel's conquest of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, which made unmediated contact between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs possible once again.

So it was that the Israeli position during the Likud's reign came to reflect the Palestinisation of the conflict experienced in the Arab countries. Everyday social interactions between Jews and Arabs were coloured by the perceived threat that the Arab armies posed to Israel. Inter-communal conflict also lends itself to racism to a greater extent than conflicts between states.

Gush Emunim also contributed to spreading racist attitudes among the Israeli public. The open conflict between the settlers and the inhabitants of the occupied territory deteriorated into a campaign of counter-terrorism. Another equally important factor was the manner in which religious messianism was interwoven with political nationalism: national identity came to be defined in tribal terms (ie, Jews against Gentiles); the dehumanisation of the Arabs was given Halachic sanction (ie, the commandment concerning Amalek); and an obnoxious association was forged between the land ("Land of our Forefathers") and blood ("Jewish blood shall not be spilt with impunity") which reached Striecherian dimensions in the ravings of Rabbi Kahane ("the purity of Jewish blood.")

The fanatic hardcore has attracted quite a few sympathisers; there are those who support them wholeheartedly, those who sympathise with their aims, etc. The murderous Jewish underground has more than its share of admirers, apologists and sympathisers. Sharon has not seen fit to condemn Kahane openly and a future pact between Kahane, Sharon and Eitan cannot be ruled out. The ideological underpinnings for Israeli fascism exist; whether or not they are put to the test remains to be seen.

Populism Meets Chauvinism

The anti-Arab hatred of a large sector of the Sephardi community is the link that connects populism with racist nationalism. This hatred will probably increase as long as feelings of ethnic discrimination are thrown into ever sharper relief. Anti-Arab hatred is a means of demonstrating one's Jewish identity and emphasising the difference between "us" and "them." It further acts to strengthen feelings of superiority and reinforces the idea that "they" are inferior to "us."

Populism is also an outgrowth of the feelings of oppression experienced by those at the bottom of the social ladder. It represents a fissure in the hierarchy of social values determined by education, employment, salary (referred to by sociologists as "social status") and allegiance to the social group that sets political and cultural norms. As poorly-educated people whose social status is low gain ascendancy, society at large takes on the characteristics of a mob, motivated by anti-intellectual tendencies; ("When I hear the word culture," said a top-ranking Nazi SS man, "I reach for my gun").

In such a situation, public life becomes both more violent and more barbarous. Concomitantly, social elites become alienated after having been deflected to the margins of social life; their cultural values are condemned by the mob as being nothing more than presumptuousness.

Fascism cannot be successful without a leader. A shady fanatic like Kahane, bereft of any real roots in Israel, cannot fit the bill. Nor can a crusty soldier-farmer-carpenter like Rafui Eitan. At most they can sow the seeds of violent anti-Arab hatred for someone else to harvest. A successful fascist leader must be sophisticated enough to manipulate the political establishment to his benefit so that he can achieve power by democratic means and retain it by dictatorial rule. His image must be capable of satisfying those clamouring for a "strong man" who can "impose law and order," moreover, he must be the kind of politician willing to disregard legality when it comes to "dealing with the Arabs, the leftists, the defeatists and the traitors." He must be able to enlist the support of the mob without losing the nationalist elite (ie Gush Emunim and Tehiya). Arik Sharon seems to fit the role to a 'T,' in spite of the fact that he has revealed a propensity for chaos rather than for order; the desire for a "Leader" is not rational and can often be directed at a man whose methods are unconventional — to say the least.

MK Kahane rallies supporters into raising their fists the symbol of his fascistic right-wing Kach Movement. *Anti-Arab hatred is on the rise.*

Sharon, A Likely Leader?

Will Sharon sieze the opportunity? At present he has exhibited at least one trait that ought to arouse our suspicions. Fascist leaders tend to identify their own good with that of the nation at large by presenting their private interests in national dimensions and condemning their adversaries as enemies of the people. Sharon is no exception to this rule. He termed the Kahan Commission's findings a "blood libel on the Jewish people." He has referred to his libel suit against *Time* magazine as "a case fought on behalf of the Israeli people" and has labelled *Time* "an anti-Semitic journal." Micha Harish, who dared complain about the minister of industry and commerce's protracted absence from the country at this critical juncture, was referred to by Sharon as "a person the Jewish people will overcome." The Labour Alignment received similar treatment during the elections.

The act of presenting political and personal opponents as enemies of the nation hints at the fate they deserve. Is that what Sharon's erstwhile lieutenant, Uri Dan, had in mind when he said that whoever did not want Sharon as defence minister would get him as prime minister?

Many people believe that Israeli fascism is not in the cards. But two or three years ago many people felt the same way about a Jewish underground. When the underground was finally apprehended, in the middle of carrying out an operation which could have cost scores of innocent men, women and children their lives, it emerged that among the underground's plans was a crackpot scheme to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount [sic — ed]. Many people responded to the disclosures about the underground with undisguised approval, sympathy and support. The members of the underground were seen as being the "flesh of our flesh" and thus, their gratuitous acts of violence were overlooked and the government was blamed for having failed to deal with the situation that had provoked the underground into action. Indeed, many people did not realize that perpetrators of atrocities throughout history have appeared in exactly the same light to their countrymen.

Only For Arabs?

If Israel does go fascist, the men and institutions that assume power will undoubtedly appear incapable of physically attacking their political opponents, putting them in concentration camps or brutally expelling the Arabs from the country. But the inner dialectic of fascism will not be stilled. There is no such thing as "deluxe fascism;" anti-democratic governments that assume power in times of crisis do not step down of their own accord. And there is no such thing as an enlightened despot. There are many people who at present are clamouring for a "real leader" who can "impose law and order" and deal with the Arabs in a "firm manner," but the genie they want to coax out of the bottle will swallow them too. But by then, it will be too late. (Translation: Davar, December 7,1984).

At Dheisheh Camp:

An MK Gets an Inside View

MK Mordechai Bar-On toured Dheisheh camp with a delegation of Knesset members in December. He wrote some of his impressions of the visit in the Hebrew daily *Al Hamishmar*.

The MKs of the Citizens' Rights Movement (CRM) visited Dheisheh refugee camp with two objectives in mind. One, to see what was going on in Dheisheh for ourselves (and check out the acrimonious complaints we had been receiving about the conditions in the camp) and two, to protest against the fact that the defence authorities have been allowing Rabbi Moshe Levinger to stage a provocative vigil at the entrance to the camp for the past five weeks.

Although Dheisheh residents are not permitted to form organisations of their own — a prohibition not limited solely to Dheisheh — we were received by a group of young intellectuals who, despite their denials to the contrary, appear to serve as a kind of *ad hoc* committee that represents at least some of the camp residents regarding everything concerned with their struggle against the Israeli authorities. Entering one of the lanes in the camp, one of the members of our delegation was approached by a local carpenter he happened to know; the old fellow whispered in his ear that our host was one of the worst provocateurs in the camp and that "he was to blame for all the trouble." But it would appear that the carpenter and those who share his views are in the minority. They are for opting out of the national-political struggle and trying to "get along" with the authorities so that things can get back to normal.

Dheisheh was established in 1948 beside a small pine grove located on the hillside above the camp (hence its name, Dheisheh, which means "grove" in Arabic). The camp absorbed refugees from about 30 villages in the Jerusalem corridor and on the Judean plains that were captured by the Israeli army during the 1948 war. Most of the people living in Dheisheh today were born and raised there.

For our young hosts, names like Ajur, Walza, Dir el-Hawa, Kaz'za and Hashral do not evoke personal memories, but are rather the ballast on which they hang their politics. Their personal experiences have been limited to the single square kilometre of land on which Dheisheh is built. Ten thousand people live there in sub-standard conditions. Even their Arab neighbours look down on them, treating them like second-class citizens. As a result, they have become bitter and rebellious. They are steadfast in their desire to leave the squalor of camp life and return to the villages that were taken from them. Over the years, their villages have assumed the aura of an Edenic golden land, doubtless the effect of the old people's stories.

We were obviously not the first to be given the routine. Our hosts spared no effort in trying to impress upon us the extent of the "atrocities committed against them under the Israeli occupation." Most of their claims have been verified by other sources, and yet, for all that, their words carried more than a trace of propogandistic bombast, especially when directed to the foreign journalists and TV crews that accompanied us on our visit.

Standing inside the camp and looking out at the Jerusalem-Hebron road, one immediately realizes why the camp's nationalistic youth chose it as a target. Traffic is heavy; the road is a major artery which links Jerusalem not only with Hebron but also with Arad and Beer Sheba.

But, we weren't in Dheisheh as foreign journalists or as representatives of international charity organizations. The three of us, as Jewish MKs, know full well that even if no stones were thrown at us, the conflict is still one between two national groups and not simply a conflict between human beings. Standing in Dheisheh, one cannot but consider the difficult task the security forces have been called upon to perform. It is their duty to keep this indispensible artery open to traffic.

Dheisheh itself is a depressing and squalid sight. There are no trees or green patches to be found in the camp. The small houses are made out of clay or cement, unlike the stone houses one sees everywhere else in the district. Open sewers criss-cross the narrow lanes that run through the camp.

The army sealed off the entrances to Dheisheh with concrete walls and cement barricades at the outset of the stone-throwing campaign. Today, the only way out or into the camp is via an entrance located at the back of the complex that involves a long detour along the back alleys of the camp.

Curfews and midnight arrests have become daily events. Approximately two hundred Dheisheh residents are either currently being held in detention or serving lengthy prison sentences. Since Levinger launched his private war against Dheisheh, the residents of the camp have been disturbed more than once by his followers and Kahane who staged incursions into the camp. Incursions of this sort have been known to end in violence.

Sitting in the living room of our host, Mahmoud (a pseudonym), we were provided with a translation of a petition signed by many of the young residents of the camp listing their grievances against the authorities. Mahmoud's Hebrew is quite good and one of the journalists accompanying us also helped out. From time to time, an old peasant woman would barge into the room in order to moan about the situation. Although her histrionic appearances were obviously staged for our benefit, they did not belittle the gravity of the camp residents' harrowing plight and the terrible fate that has been theirs since 1948.

"Why don't you set up your own patrols in order to ensure that youngsters don't throw any more stones?" we asked our hosts.

They gave us the standard reply: "Why should we have to protect the Israelis? That's the job of the police and the army."

No, they are not asking for a truce, a ceasefire or a local peace agreement. Nor are they asking for our pity. They see Dheisheh as a hot front-line position in the struggle against Israeli occupation. *The camp resembles a ghetto or prison camp similar to those set up by the Nazis. The occupation forces are using all the means at their disposal to oppress our people.* The above is from a flyer we received calling on international organisations, committees for the protection of human rights, the UN Secretary General, and all democratic and progressive forces around the world to come out in solidarity with Dheisheh residents, and protest the repressive practices of the Israeli occupation in the name of freedom, democracy and humanity. It would appear that an effort is underway to make the name "Dheisheh" a rallying call of the Palestinian struggle.

"There is no room in Dheisheh for the initiatives of vigilante squads or stake-outs like that of Rabbi Levinger" — Bar-On.

There is one point about which I have no doubts, namely, Rabbi Levinger's presence at Dheisheh. He has absolutely no business to be there. The drop in the number of stone-throwing incidents on the Dheisheh road has nothing to do with Levinger but is rather a result of the presence of the Israeli soldiers who have been assigned to guard him. If it takes a group of soldiers to preserve the peace, then they should be stationed there without any connection to Levinger. His presence outside the camp only makes matters more difficult for the army, since his sole purpose is to provoke Dheisheh residents.

If violence is to be rooted out and the camp is to be cleared of trouble-makers, the security forces are the ones to deal with the matter. There is no room in Dheisheh for the initiatives of vigilante squads or stake -outs like that of Rabbi Levinger.

Moreover, I am not embarrassed to admit that I was ashamed and stirred by the great suffering I witnessed, be it that of an old man who had been beaten up by the settlers, the frightened expressions on the faces of the children of the camp, the wailing of the old women, or the fate of workers who were fired from their jobs after having missed work on account of the all too frequent curfews imposed on the camp. Repression and coercion cannot forward the development of good relations with our neighbours with whom we are destined to live for generations to come.

On the other hand, it is impossible to tolerate a situation in which a major traffic artery can be endangered day in and day out by stone throwers. It is incumbent on the security forces to find a means of solving this problem. Some of the measures they have employed — although not all of them — are attributable to the hostility of camp residents; however, it is doubtful that measures such as these can ever succeed at calming the situation.

The problem is not simply one of the young people and stone throwers of Dheisheh vs. the Israeli soldiers. Dheisheh is a microcosm of the bitter conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and it reveals the interminable embroilment that continued occupation will hold in store.

Stone-throwing is one of the only options left for Palestinian nationalists. It reveals their rebelliousness and rejection of the Israeli occupation as a whole, and of the settlements in particular. It is hard to imagine them abandoning this position in the foreseeable future. But we who use these roads cannot tolerate the unnecessary dangers inherent in this situation. The desire for calm is clearly an Israeli interest insofar as it helps preserve the *status quo*. Given the fact that the Palestinians do not want to come to terms with the *status quo* in the occupied territories, the Israelis have had to take repressive measures against them, and thus, a vicious circle of violence and counter-violence has been set in motion. The only way out is for Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories and come to an historic compromise with the Palestinians so that they too are interested in ending the tension and promoting peaceful relations. This is the only way to bring this vicious circle of violence to an end.

(Translation: Al Hamishmar, December 26, 1984)

West Bank Palestinian residents have long been suspect of Jordan's intentions for this eastern portion of Palestine, originally truncated by the UN partition plan of 1947. They remember well how Jordan manipulated an "annexation conference" in 1948, as **Maher AbuKhater** describes in the following story.

Jericho Conference 1948:

Jordan's Rush to Annexation

The convening of the 17th session of the Palestine National Council in Amman, Jordan, November 22, reminded some residents of the Israeli-occupied West Bank of a conference held in Jericho in 1948 which set the ground for the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan. Bashir Barghouti, editor-in-chief of *Al Talia* Arabic weekly referred to the Jericho conference in a full-page article on the PNC session in the November 29 issue. *Al Fajr* English weekly also published a local opinion in which reference was made to the conference.

What is the Jericho conference and why is it that now talk about it is increasing?

Soon after the signing of the armistice agreement between the Arab armies that entered Palestine in 1948 and the Zionist forces seeking to establish an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine, Jordan's monarch King Abdullah began pressuring the Palestinian people under its control to establish formal unity between Palestine and Jordan. An immediate result of this pressure was the convening of a conference in the Jordanian capital of Amman on October 1, 1948 at the Petra movie house.

Even though the Amman conference was called for by a committee of Palestinians composed of Suleiman al-Taji al-Farouqi, Sheikh Sa'ad al-Din al-Alami and Ajaj Nweihid, it had been urged by the Jordanian government, then under Tawfiq Abu al-Huda. The purpose of the conference, which was attended by Palestinian refugees and Jordanian officials, was to call for unification of the Palestinian territory not occupied by the Zionist forces to Jordan and to appoint King Abdullah as King of Palestine and Jordan. The Palestinian committee also called for a second conference to be held in Jericho, Palestine, with additional Palestinian representation to give the unification decision more legitimacy.

Gaza Conference

While the Jordanian monarchy was pushing for unification, many Palestinian leaders were trying to overcome a defeat by the Zionists which left the Palestinians in absolute turmoil and most of Palestine under the control of alien forces. Soon after the second armistice was signed in July 1948, the Mufti, Haj Amin al- Husseini, the head of the Arab Supreme Council in Palestine, called for the establishment of an all-Palestine government to administer affairs in what Palestinian territory remained and to work towards liberating the rest of Palestine. Haj Amin called for a Palestinian conference to be held in Gaza on December 1, 1948 to form a Palestinian national council and the all-Palestine government which was supposed to be under the premiership of Ahmad Hilmi. Out of 150 prominent local Palestinians invited to the conference, 85 showed up.

The establishment of an independent Palestinian government was seen by many Palestinians as an attempt to thwart Jordanian efforts to annex what was left of Palestine. Even though these efforts were welcomed by the Arab League,(whose members were not on best of terms,) Jordan, and Iraq as well, which was under the control of King Faisal, a brother of King Abdullah of Jordan, opposed the new government. They were supported in their opposition by Britain which had just withdrawn its forces from Palestine leaving it in a state of war.

The Palestinian conference was convened in Gaza rather than Jerusalem, the declared capital of the Palestinian state, because Jerusalem was under the tight control of the Jordanian army while Gaza was under Egypt. The Jordanian army, under a British commander, Glubb Pasha, was in pursuit of the Palestinian nationalist forces, persecuting and liquidating them in order to crush any opposition to its rule over Palestine. The Mufti, and many of his aides, took refuge in the Egyptian-held territories of Palestine and established their power base there. But due to their distance from the rest of the Arab-controlled Palestinian lands, communication with the rest of the Palestinian masses broke down.

Haj Amin al-Husseini (the Mufti); led a strong opposition to Jordanian attempts to annex the West Bank demanding that an independent Palestinian government be established in the Palestinian territory not occupied by the Zionist.

Jericho's Winter Palace

While the Gaza conference was in session, another conference was being held in Jericho. On December 1, 1948, the Jericho conference called for by pro-Jordan Palestinians convened in the Winter Palace with representation mostly by refugees from south Palestine. The Palestinian refugees, under the leadership of Hebron Sheikh, Muhammad Ali Ja'bari, came to the conference with the conviction that the Zionist forces would soon occupy the Hebron area which was under the Jordanian army. Sheikh Ja'bari, reportedly, was more than eager to give King Abdullah full and unconditional mandate over Palestine hoping that he would be able to liberate the occupied territories and protect what was left of it. Ja'bari brought with him a virtual militia. In an interview with Mahdi Abd al-Hadi, (The Palestinian Question and Political Settlement Proposals 1934-1974,) "I went to Jericho one day before the conference date. I had with me 200 people from Hebron. We were all armed because the road was not safe."

Palestinian personalities who attended the conference and who were part of a group opposed to unconditional annexation of the West Bank of the Jordan River, said Ja'bari and his supporters did not allow anyone from the opposition to speak. Ja'bari appointed himself as chairperson of the conference, ousting Suleiman al-Farouqi who had chaired the Amman conference. Al-Farouqi withdrew from the Jericho conference along with Sheikh Sa'ad al-Din al-Alami in protest against this move by Ja'bari. The opposition was forced to keep its mouth shut. Ja'bari said: "They (the opposition) were well organised ... I heard Farid Fakhri al-Din calling to postpone the conference and asking those who convened it to call it off .. I said to him: 'Fakhri, you sold your land, left your home and came here making a fuss. Do you want what is left of Beisan and the rest of Palestine to have the same fate as your home.. Get out of the conference as you left Beisan.' But he refused to leave, so some men got him out by force. As a result all the opposition voices were silenced."

The opposition, - made up of such personalities as Anwar Khatib, Dr. Mousa Abdullah Husseini, Yehia Hamoudeh, Kamal Nasser, Abdullah Neiwas and Abdullah Reimawi - was not opposed to a form of unification with Jordan but was against absolute unification. They wanted to ask that the conference be postponed in order to have a true representation of the Palestinian people since most of those at the conference were from south Palestine. They also wanted to formulate proposals to be later handed to the Jordanian government, which would call for preserving the Palestinian identity and for continued struggle until all Palestine is liberated. They only wanted Jordan to be a temporary guardian over the Palestinian territory until there was a change in the political situation. But none of these ideas were heard at the conference as Ja'bari and his men prevented Dr. Husseini, representing this opposition, from speaking.

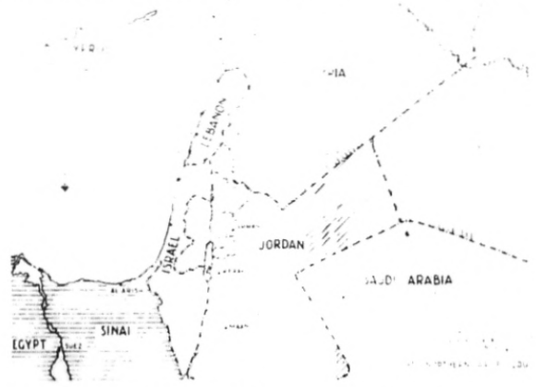
A local Palestinian who attended the conference 30 years ago told *Al Fajr* that some voices from the opposition were heard but a trick was played on them. He said the loudspeakers, which were set up so that the thousands of Palestinians who gathered outside the Winter Palace to hear the proceedings, were manipulated by Ja'bari's men. He said when the proponents of annexation spoke they could be heard by everyone. But when the few opponents spoke, the speakers went dead. As a result, the mood of the conference and outside appeared to be in favor of annexation with King Abdullah as supreme ruler.

2 Hours of History

The Jericho conference lasted only two hours. A decision was hastily made supporting unconditional unification and urging King Abdullah to become king over Palestine as well as Jordan. A delegation made up of Ja'bari and others went to meet King Abdullah who was waiting for them across the river at Shuneh. (The conference was held in Jericho because of its proximity to the royal headquarters.) Abdullah immediately agreed to the decision and started working towards actual annexation. At the same time the rest of the Arab countries, with the exception of Iraq, condemned the decisions of the Jericho conference as a "comedy." They refused to recognise Jordan's authority over the West Bank since that part of Palestine was under military control by Jordan, and since the Palestinian people were dispersed , it was impossible to tally their opinion on this matter.

The Palestinians who opposed any kind of unification with Jordan did so on the grounds that time was not ripe for unification, which they feared would bury any Palestinian identity. They also knew of the poor performance of the Arab armies during the 1948 war with the Zionist enemy and how King Abdullah agreed to concessions of the Zionists after the signing of the armistice agreement, giving the Zionists more Palestinian territory than they won in the war. Also Jordan's crushing of the armed Palestinian revolutionaries who did not agree with its policy and the banning of Palestinian political parties, especially the communists, convinced many Palestinians that Jordan was not intent on winning back occupied Palestine. They also wanted the all-Palestine government to rule over Palestine and decide future strategy.

Exactly one week after the Jericho conference, the Jordanian government decided to accept the Jericho decisions and to ask for international recognition of Jordan's sovereignty over Palestine. Recognition came only from Britain and Iraq. The rest of the Arab countries urged Jordan through diplomatic means not to rush its decision to annex. Jordan stalled — especially after a visit to Amman by Nuri al-Said on behalf of the Iraqi government. In May 1949, the Jordanian cabinet of Tawfiq Abu al-Huda was changed to include Palestinians. In April 1950 elections were held in the West Bank and Jordan to choose the new Jordanian parliament. It included Palestinians who had earlier opposed unconditional unification between the two banks. The elections and a government decision in this year created a *de facto* annexation of the West Bank which also later received approval from the rest of the world community including the Arab League.



Between 1950 and 1967 the Hashmite Kingdom of Jordan included areas on both sides of the Jordan River.

Abdullah In Ramallah

Before all these constitutional measures were being developed, Jordanian officials and pro-Jordan Palestinians were working towards actual unification. A conference was called for and held in Ramallah on December 26, 1948 at the request of Omar Mattar, the appointed military governor of the West Bank, to give legitimacy to the Jericho decisions. The Ramallah conference, held at the Dunia movie theatre, was attended by King Abdullah in person and by several Jordanian officials. It was also attended by local mayors and a wide representation of Palestinians. It ended also with strong support for the Jericho conference decisions but it is believed this decision was reached due to the presence of the king and because the conference was not a true representative of the Palestinian people.

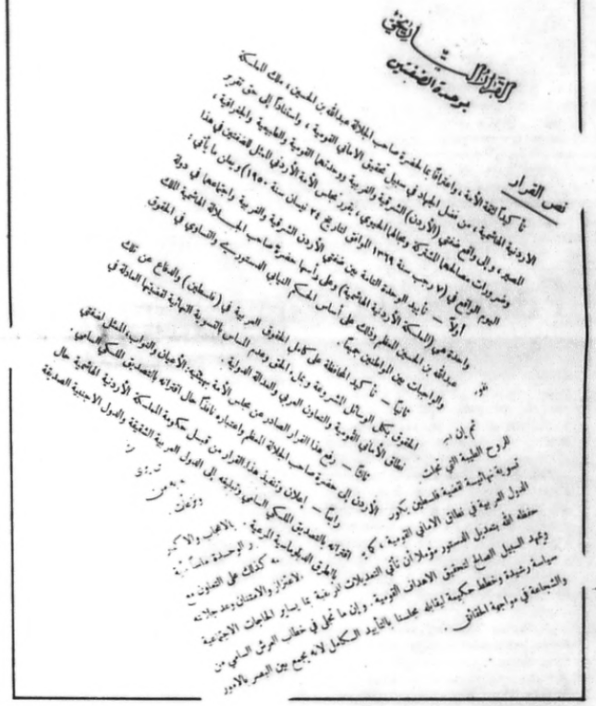
On December 28, 1948, another conference was held in Nablus. It discussed the Jericho and Ramallah decisions and came out with a mild acceptance of both.

Even though the Amman, Jericho, Ramallah and Nablus conferences all supported unification of the two banks of the Jordan River, none of them set the legal grounds for that action. Camilia Badr, a researcher at the Arab Studies Center in Jerusalem concluded in her book on the legal situation in the West Bank, that since none of the international or Arab communities gave official recognition to the unification, then legally the West Bank is not a Jordanian territory. The simple fact that the Jordanian government took the decisions of the Jericho conference as legal grounds to annex the West Bank does not necessarily indicate that it became permanent owner of the land, leaving the Palestinians as the final voice to decide what is to become of their homeland.

Some Palestinians totally reject the notion that there are any similarities between the Jericho conference and the recent 17th Palestine National Council session in Amman. They argue that the PNC was truly representative of the Palestinian peoplealthough factions within the Palestine Liberation Organisation opposed it and did not attend it, and in spite of the fact that it called for confederation with Jordan of any "liberated" Palestinian territory.

Other Palestinians fear that the turmoil the Palestinian people are going through now is similar to what existed following the 1948 war, leaving them vulnerable to pressure from Jordan which still considers the decisions of the Jericho conference as legal grounds for a mandate over the West Bank. They fear that the excess television and radio coverage given the conference mainly stressed unity between the two banks of the river, while it ignored other aspects of the meeting pertaining to purely Palestinian affairs. As in the Jericho conference, these Palestinians say, the media outlets were controlled by the Jordanian government which is eager to retain control over the occupied West Bank — as a result only the pro-Jordan parts of the speeches made at the conference aired. This left the impression among the thousands of Palestinians who watched the PNC sessions on Jordanian television, that confederation with Jordan is necessary and Jordan should be given a mandate to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people in any Mideast peace talks, and especially so since the United States and Israel are strongly opposed to talking to the PLO.

Above: King Abdullah at the Jordanian Parliament session which ratified a government decision to annex the Palestinian territory west of the Jordan River to the Hashemite kingdom. Below: The text of the Parliament's statement on the unification.



The Resolutions of the Jericho Conference:

1) The conference expresses appreciation to the Arab countries for what sacrifices they have made and asks them to continue fighting to save Palestine.

2) Calls for a Jordanian-Palestinian unity. The conference still considers Palestine as a whole and does not accept any solution that does not agree with this principle.

3) The Arab countries can resist dangers that are facing them and that threaten Palestine only through national unity. This should begin by uniting Palestine to East Jordan, as the first step towards true Arab unity.

4) The conference elects H.M. King Abdullah as king over all Palestine and salutes him and his army and the Arab armies that fought and are still fighting in defence of Palestine.

5) Stresses the necessity of returning all refugees to their homes and compensating them.

6) The conference proposes that H.M. King Abdullah call for a legitimate election for Palestinian Arabs to consult about their affairs.

7) The United Nations, the Arab League the Arab nations and representatives of the other nations will be informed of these decisions. From " The Palestine Catastrophy ", by Abdullah al-Tal, commander of the Jerusalem battle. (1959), Part 1.

Children in Jabalya camp after a curfew:
"Rabin is taking away the few crumbs Sharon gave us."

Pathos in Gaza

The often forgotten Gaza Strip was hoping that Israeli officials Peres and Rabin would be different than the previous Likud administrations. Dan Tzadkoni describes in *Davar* Gazans disappointments with the new Israeli government.

When the prime minister and the defence minister announced their intention of changing government policy *vis-a-vis* the population of the occupied territories, some of my Gazan acquaintances, who believed that the Labour Alignment would be different than the Likud, allowed themselves to foster the hope that better days were in the offing. But now their hopes seem to have been dashed, and they have even more grievances than they had before. An engineer I know told me *apropos* a certain incident — that, "Rabin is taking away the few crumbs Sharon gave us."

During his first year in office, Begin announced that he would grant the population of the occupied territories the same rights as those enjoyed by Israelis. Of course, no one took him seriously. But when Peres and Rabin spoke about "improving relations," a lot of people took them at their word. They wanted to believe that Peres and Rabin were not cut from the same mould as their Likud counterparts and that the "change of attitude" they announced would assume concrete form. But that hasn't happened. Perhaps the military government is to blame. (Hasn't the time come to call a spade "a spade?" The "civil administration" is really nothing more than an euphemism.) During Sharon's period in office, the military government lost some of its powers and all of its initiative. It seems that the officers in charge came to the conclusion that it was better to lie low and do nothing; by doing nothing they have managed to avoid conflict.

The above can serve as a sorry introduction to the stories I am about to relate, which deal, for the most part, with the relations between the residents of the Gaza Strip and the military government.

Health Disgrace

Dr. I'ad Serge, the director of the military-run hospital for the mentally ill in Gaza, was appointed to the military government's health council two years ago. The health department is ostensibly run by a Gazan doctor — Dr. Kheiry Abu Ramadan — but the person actually running the show is Israeli army health officer Dr. Eli Lash of Ashkelon; two other Israelis oversee administrative affairs and deal with the hospital staff.

The council has proven to be a disappointing experience for Dr. Serge. In a memorandum sent to his superiors he revealed a number of defects in its operation. He claims that the council's decisions are not put into practice and that hospital administrators and department chiefs simply do not have the authority they require: the result is anarchy in the hospitals. It is hardly surprising that the medical and administrative staff are apathetic about their work, given the prevailing conditions in the hospitals. Dr. Serge claims that the medical services are marred by wastefulness, a lack of appropriate medical equipment, shortcomings in the treatment provided to patients and unsanitary conditions. He also mentions the fact that many people are given positions on the basis of their connections (usually through family ties) rather than on the basis of their qualifications.

Likewise, doctors are unwilling to take responsibility for their work. Dr. Serge believes that one reason for this is the low salary doctors and nurses receive. In his memorandum he points out that there is no supervision of private clinics and pharmacies, creating a "free-for-all" situation in the dispensation of medicines and drugs. Needless to say, his memorandum wasn't appreciated by the military government.

Although there have been obvious improvements in the standard of health care in the Gaza Strip since 1967, the residents tend to compare their standards with those prevailing in Israel rather than their standard of health care under Egyptian rule prior to 1967. And the gap is very much to the detriment of the Gaza Strip.

Schoolgrounds Deliberately Ill-Maintained

The al-Carmel School in western Gaza has a student population of 1500, but lacks a playground. The sandy yard the children play in during recess is strewn with rocks. Their parents, or rather, the parents' committee decided to take the bull by the horns and collect donations to cover the schoolyard with a layer of asphalt. The al-Carmel School, like most Gazan schools, is a government institution, but if the government doesn't have the funds or desire to pave over the yard of an Arab school, the parents have no choice but to do it on their own. There is a good chance of their receiving funds from the PLO or foreign charities, however, the Israeli administration frowns on such things. So the civil administration's education officer, Aharon Rejwam, predicated permission to set up a fund on his receipt of a detailed list of donors.

One of the members of the parent's committee told me: "We won't turn to the PLO — for one thing, they're having financial difficulties at present. But maybe we'll succeed in getting some money from foreign charities." If the Israeli military government would cover the expense of paving over the schoolyard of the al-Carmel School, all these problems wouldn't have cropped up to begin with.

The parents of another school in the area applied to the military government for permission to build a wall around the school; they wanted to cultivate a garden in the schoolyard. According to one of the members of the parent's committee, the military government thanked them for their initiative but refused to authorise the construction of a wall.

Sports Security

For 12 years sports groups from the Gaza Strip have travelled to the West Bank to compete in sports tournaments and have returned home the same day. There are approximately 30 sports clubs in the Gaza Strip; there is even a regional soccer league. The sports clubs have basketball, volleyball and pingpong teams, to name a few. Recently, the military government decided — out of the blue — to prohibit them from travelling to Nablus, Hebron or Bethlehem for competitions without its authorisation.

Perhaps there is a security reason behind this move, but the chairperson of one of the sports clubs who told me the story wanted to know if Rabin was going to prohibit the few things that were permissible under Sharon.

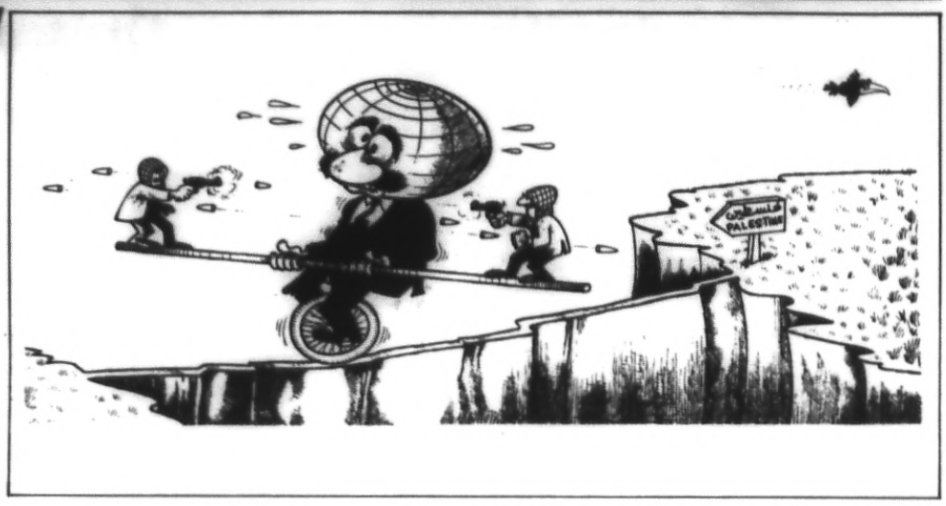
I know a contractor from Gaza who owns a safari jacket with four pockets. When we start joking around about the economic situation, he points to the four pockets in his jacket and tells me what each one is for. His most important pocket is reserved for dinars — "real money." His second pocket is for Egyptian pounds. His third pocket is for dollars and his fourth is for shekels — which he still needs for day-to-day expenses. The rest of his money is tucked away in foreign currency. When it comes to business transactions — he'd be lost without his safari jacket. (Translation: Dani Tzadkoni, Davar, December 17, 1984)

The government doesn't have the funds or desire to pave over the yard of an Arab school.

18th Christmas Under Occupation

AL FAJR's photographer **Baher Ashhab** visited Bethlehem on December 24 and January 6 Christmas eve according to the Western and Eastern Calenders, and presented this photo essay of the 18th year under Israeli occupation in the city of peace.

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The airlift of thousands of Ethiopian Jews and the repercussions of the Qawasmeh killing were the main stories in the local Palestinian press this week. Local papers criticised the airlift operation in general and the governments of Israel, Sudan and the US in particular.

For the second week in a row, Palestinian residents travelled to Hebron to give condolences to the Qawasmeh family and the newspapers were full of ads, poems and obituaries mourning Qawasmeh.

Salute to Yarmouk

Despite suppression and siege, the Palestinian camp, Yarmouk, in Damascus raised pictures of the leader Abu Ammar on the 20th anniversary of the revolution. It was able to combine its grief over the death of Qawasmeh and its optimism to continue adherence to the PLO under its legitimate leadership. At the same time it confronted the clients and hirelings of the Assad regime inside and outside that great camp.

Those clients and hirelings tried to exploit the conditions of suppression and siege in the camp. They rusned into the alleys of the camp under Syrian protection with the assassination squads, casting doubt around the cause and confirming their betrayal of it. But the camp rejected them and reaffirmed its adherence to its people, its cause and its legitimate leadership.

The so-called nationalist alliance — which contains clients and hirelings of Assad's regime — tried, through this acrobatic rush, under cover of the most honourable revolution, to abuse this revolution first and spread the news of Qawasmeh's assassination throughout the besieged camp, and then to use the wounds of this camp, in particular, as a tool in the hand of Assad's regime.

But Yarmouk camp, representing all Palestinian camps, raised its voice fiercefully and angrily against the murderers, traitors and hirelings and against the regime which, on the eve of the Lebanon invasion in 1982, negotiated with Israel to replace its forces to destroy the PLO infrastructure in Lebanon.

This unified Palestinian voice from all directions insists on rejection of conducting any kind of dialogue with those whose hands are stained with Palestinian blood and those who negotiated with Israel to destroy the PLO.

Mature and correct dialogue will continue with the Democratic Alliance which condemned the crime of assassinating Qawasmeh and condemned all crimes against the Palestinian people and its cause.

In this context we may blame the Popular Front, which condemned the crime and which constitutes a major party in the Democratic Alliance, for participating with the clients and hirelings of the Syrian regime in their suppression and siege of Yarmouk camp under the pretext of celebration.

It was, in fact, a celebration of the crime — how can we reconciliate between condemnation and celebration?

We firmly believe in national unity on the basis of commitment to Palestinian legitimacy. We also believe in the necessity of avoiding any mistakes by any party.

AL FAJR
January 2

PLO And The Major Arab Goals

The PLO, at present, aims at three goals. First, to restore the Palestinian cause to the top of the Arab agenda. Second, to stop the Gulf War. Third, to achieve Arab solidarity.

These three goals are interrelated and every one of them leads to the other. Therefore, the PLO under the leadership of Yasir Arafat is working to achieve these three goals, according to the plan endorsed by the 17th PNC session.

On the basis of this Palestinian plan, the PLO continues its efforts to convene an Arab summit which will lead to Arab solidarity and consequently to ending the Gulf War. Following this, the Palestinian cause will be at the top of the Arab agenda. Anyone who opposes these aims is actually working against the Palestinian cause and against the Arab nation in general.

Recent events have proven that "waiting" for those who hinder the Palestinian Arab move to join in, is of no avail and leads to more disasters.

The insistence on Arab "consensus" in this regard is also fruitless and leads to more fragmentation.

Therefore, serious efforts should be made to achieve the three goals: elevating the Palestinian cause with its legitimate representative, the PLO; ending the Gulf War; and bringing about Arab solidarity with the existing Arab majority.

AL FAJR
January 4

We Are Not "Tribes" and "Clans"!!

The Israeli Minister of Defence Yitzhak Rabin recently made statements concerning the municipalities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. His statements were based on three main points: 1. the agreement of the heads of the central families to nominate people for the mayoralties, 2. the agreement of those people to assume the posts, 3. the civil administration's approval of the appointment of these people to replace incumbent appointed mayors.

We should pause at the statements issued by the person who, in his capacity as minister of defence, is in direct charge of the occupied territories. If anything, these statements indicate that the approach of the current Israeli government does not differ from that of the previous Likud government regarding the occupied territories.

The previous Likud government tried to appoint mayors. Now Yitzhak Rabin confirms this notion even though he is talking from a different perspective.

What surprises people in the occupied territories is that the minister of defence is referring to us as "families and clans." It is as if the social and political structure in the occupied territories were based on this division. We are sure that the minister of defence realizes that the situation in the occupied territories is completely different. The 1976 elections proved that allegiance is not to clans. It is for the public interest and for getting rid of occupation. This leads us to the major question about the intentions of the current Israeli government regarding the occupied territories: does Israel intend to go on ignoring the fact that we are a people who aspire for self-determination?

If the answer is negative, it means that the Israeli government refuses to draw any lessons from the past.

In this case, we in the occupied territories should have patience and perseverance. The foreseeable future does not hold any good.

However hard the Israeli minister of defence tries to portray us as clans and families, the fact remains that we are a people whose hopes and aspirations have melted in the pot of public interest. We are just like any other people that is united by the desire to achieve a political entity, to create a constitution and elect those who would be in charge of our lives so that all are equal before the law chosen by the people.

We were hopeful that the Israeli minister of defence would face reality and allow free elections that would enable the inhabitants of the occupied territories to choose their own representatives or mayors, just as the people were given the opportunity in 1976. This is the only way.

AL QUDS
January 5

Ethiopian Jews' Case

The US decided to increase its financial aid to Israel for settlement in the wake of the transfer of thousands of Ethiopian Jews to Israel with the knowledge and financing of Washington.

At the same time, American officials are unhappy with the leaks because they would hinder the operation. It seems that the US is more careful than Israel itself about its interests.

The process is a new example of the continued American policy in the region. This policy aims at maintaining Israeli superiority over Arab countries so as to ensure the implementation of the American policy of plunder and control.

If a decisive Arab position is a constant requirement against the US, then what is required now is to reveal the Sudanese role in this process and to impose sanctions in it.

AL SHA'AB
January 7

Palestinians Reject Rabin's Mayoral Selection Process

During a debate in the Israeli Knesset January 2, Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin declared that his government will not change its position on the issue of municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza. Rabin said that the Israeli government will not allow free democratic elections in towns and villages in the occupied territories. He proposed that the only way to change the current procedure whereby the military government appoints mayors is for the "heads of the central families" to select candidates for mayoralties, for the candidates to agree on their appointment and, finally, for the civil administration to approve their appointments.

The last municipal elections were held in 1976. Most of the mayors elected were later deported or removed from their posts and replaced by Israeli officers. Israel's national unity government had held out the possibility of local elections for several months as a political "good gesture," but Rabin's declaration appears to cancel any election plans.

Bassam Shaka'a, deposed mayor of Nablus, sees Rabin's declaration as "yet another plot in the zionist plan to deprive Palestinians of the right for self-determination and to increase their dependence on their coloniser. This was no surprise to me," Shaka'a said. "It is merely a predictable step towards complete zionist domination over our affairs."

Jordanian law which still prevails in the occupied territories stipulates that municipal elections should be held every four years, but Israeli military authorities alter local municipal law for their own purposes — in violation of international law. Shaka'a also sees Rabin's statements regarding the selection of mayoral candidates by "heads of central families" as a clear-cut use of "divide and conquer," a common Israeli tactic inside the green line and, since the 1967 war, in the occupied territories. He said, "Not only did Rabin insult our culture and society by inferring that we still function at a tribal and feudal level, but he also meant to spark internal bickering and division. Our society has long developed beyond tribalism. Our belief in progress and democracy is deeply established. We will not fall for this naive conspiracy."

Rabin's fear of democratic municipal elections throughout the territories is based on the 1976 election results which brought well-known nationalists to official political power. Rabin fears that PLO sympathisers would again sweep the city councils if elections were held.

Under the headline "We are Not Tribes or Clans" (see page 12) the Jerusalem daily *Al Quds* January 5 reacted negatively to Rabin's comment in the Knesset. The pro-Jordanian paper said that the present Israeli government policy towards the occupied territories does not differ in essence from the Likud's which first introduced the concept of civil administration and removed elected mayors from office.

Molotovs in Nablus, Dheisheh

An Israeli military vehicle suffered a broken windshield in a Molotov attack in the centre of Nablus January 7.

The Israeli military spokesperson who reported the incident said the Molotov cocktail was hurled at the vehicle as it drove down Faisal street in the centre of the West Bank's most populous city. Israeli troops closed the area and searched for the attackers. There were no reports of any arrests.

In an incident the day before, Israeli troops rounded up a number of Palestinian residents in Dheisheh refugee camp on the southern outskirts of Bethlehem after a molotov cocktail was hurled at an Israeli military vehicle on patrol near the camp. Local residents reported that Israeli troops closed off the main street near the camp and checked ID cards of travellers on the main road.

Simultaneously, another military unit searched the camp and arrested several residents. The soldiers ordered everyone who lived near the site of the attack to gather on the main road. Residents were close to scuffling with soldiers when they were ordered to close the only remaining entrance to the camp with barbed wire. Residents argued that if the entrance was closed, the 10,000 residents would be forced to walk more than one kilometre to enter or leave the camp. (Translation: Al Fajr, Al Quds)

Jerusalem Advocate Protests

Jerusalem advocate Jawad Boulos sent letters of complaint January 6 to a number of Israeli legal officials protesting what he called "improper behaviour" by Israeli prosecutor Yehi'el Katz in Nablus military court.

Boulos said in his letter that while in court Katz told him things such as, "go out," "you and (advocate) Felicia Langer are on the black list," "you are enemies of Israel," "you are a worthless person" and "I will teach you a lesson."

When Boulos attempted to consult with Katz about six Palestinian detainees from Tulkarm and Bourin in Nablus prison December 20, Katz answered only "They will receive sentences of various lengths in prison, suspended imprisonment and fines," and refused to talk further with him. Boulos replied "When are you going to abide by the law and respect lawyers?" Katz then said: "Did you learn that from Felicia Langer?" "How is it the business of Langer?" Boulos responded. Katz exploded and shot out a stream of bad terms.

Boulos sent letters to the legal advisor in Beit El, to the head of the Israeli Bar Association, David Leva'i, the head of Ramallah military court and the military legal advisor explaining the episode in detail and demanding an investigation into the issue and punishment of Katz for his ill behaviour.

Boulos told *Al Fajr* that conditions at the military court in Nablus have grown "unbearable" since the main prosecutor, Menachem Kornfays, is a settler from Elon Moreh settlement. Boulos commented: "We have to organise ourselves and act collectively against the policy of discrimination aimed at Palestinian lawyers in West Bank and Gaza courts. Jawad Boulos works out of Felicia Langer's office in Jerusalem.

Relief Services Doubled in '84

The independent Palestinian Medical Relief Committee (MRC), a volunteer organisation formed in 1982, said the number of patients it had treated in 1984 in the West Bank and Gaza was double that of 1983. The MRC paid more than 200 visits to West Bank and Gaza villages to treat more than 20,000 patients during the past year according to a statement issued by the volunteer committee.

Between four and ten physicians accompanied by a full staff of nurses and pharmacists take part in a typical MRC relief field trip. More physicians and nurses have joined the committee this year to accomodate the increasing number of visits and the broadening area of operation. Medical relief units use mobile field laboratories with sophisticated medical equipment such as electro-cardiograph machines, the statement said. All supplies and equipment are donated by hospitals, pharmacies and private individuals. The regions visited were Nablus, Hebron, Jericho, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Tulkarm, Bethlehem and the Gaza Strip.

The Medical Relief Committee was formed in mid-1982 by a group of Palestinian health personnel to extend medical treatment to Palestinians living in remote and poor villages and refugee camps in the occupied territories who cannot afford the trip to the city or doctors' fees. Its members, all volunteers, usually make field trips on weekends in their spare time.

In addition to the field trips, the MRC is currently working on establishing permanent clinics in the outlying villages and in refugee camps for follow-up treatment. They also paid hospital costs for needy patients and established a blood bank at Maqassed Hospital in Jerusalem in 1984.

Hashomer/Al-Watan

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CALENDER OF EVENTS

January 10-18: A joint Palestinian-Israeli art exhibit, "Against Occupation and for Freedom of Expression" in Tel Aviv. Davir Hall 26, Gordon St.; Tat Hall 36, Shenken St.; and Ahad Ha'Am Hall 90, Ahad Ha'Am St.
Hours: Sunday to Thursday (10:00-1:00; 3:00-7:30)
Friday (10-1).

At the Nuzha/Hakawati theatre, Jerusalem:

**Theatre:* El-Hakawati presents the final performances of "Ali, the Galilean" (Arabic with English translation) January 11 & 12 at 4:00 pm., Janaury 13 at 7:00 pm.

**Art Symposuim:* Palestinian artists will show slides of their well-known work and discuss it with the audience. January 15, 4:00 pm. **Film:* Beyond the Walls — An Israeli film about Palestinian and Jewish prisoners. January 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, at 7:00 pm.

Solitary Confinement for Neve Terza Strikers

Palestinian female political prisoners at Neve Tertza were put in solitary confinement last week for continuing a work strike against prison conditions. Political prisoners Rawda Bassir, Halimeh Freitech, Suad Ghneim, Khawla Azraq, Bushra Ma'ani, Fatimeh Daqqaq, Viola Sa'atee and Naifeh Sabah were placed in solitary confinement for periods ranging between 5 and 15 days and forbidden family visits.

A committee composed of the prisoners met last month with the prison administration to protest jailers' attempts to break their open strike against work by trying to bribe individual prisoners with extra time in the exercise area. They said at the time that all prisoners would stick together and refuse special privileges. The prisoners also warned that if the prison authorities tried to take away improvements they had previously won, prisoners would escalate their strike. Last year prisoners went on strike for nine months in a successful struggle for better conditions.

Raghda Ayyoub, one of four Lebanese female prisoners held at Neve Tertza, was released to the International Red Cross December 17 and returned to Lebanon. The other three Lebanese POWs, Fatimeh Basha, Lila Shour and Widad Kharabeiti, had their detentions extended until March 23. (Translation, Al Fajr, January 4 1985).

WEEKLY REVIEW

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch welcomed by Bethlehem Mayor Elias Friej on January 6.

January 2, 1985

BALATA YOUTH JAILED

BALATA — Nasser Mohammed Falah of Balata camp was sentenced by Nablus military court to two months in prison, a IS40,000 fine and a three-month suspended sentence on charges of throwing stones at Israeli settlers and policemen in Nablus last month.

BALATA IMAM JAILED

BALATA — The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Sheikh Darwish Mahmoud Darwish Abed, Imam of al-Akram Mosque in Balata camp, to three months in prison and five years suspended on charges of meeting Abu Jihad in Amman.

Sheikh Abed had met the Palestinian official to request aid to build a hospital in the camp.

Greek Orthodox children in Bethlehem celebrate Christmas January 6.

JABALYA YOUTH SENTENCED

JABALYA — The Gaza military court sentenced Hani Saleh Dardouneh, 18, of Jabalya camp to 21 months in prison on charges of membership in Palestinian organisations, producing explosives and distributing leaflets.

January 3, 1985

ISRAELI BUS STONED

HEBRON — An Egged bus was stoned near Tel al-Khazaf in the Hebron District, Israel Radio reported. No injuries were reported. Police are investigating.

TWO NAHALIN YOUTHS SENTENCED

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Jamal Hassan Musa to three months in jail and 33 months suspended on security charges. He was fined IS300,000. The court also sentenced Hatim Hussein Yasin to six months in jail and 18 months suspended for security reasons.

January 4, 1985

BOY KILLED BY BOMB

UJEH — Mohammed Abdullah Shawahin, 16, from the village of Ujeh near Jenin, was killed in a bomb explosion at his home. Police are investigating.

JORDAN TO HELP BEIT JALA HOSPITAL

BEIT JALA — The Jordanian government has decided to allocate JD250,000 to assist Hussein Hospital, now administered by the Israeli military authorities, in Beit Jala.

January 6, 1985

YOUSEF ABU-HUSSEIN RELEASED

UM AL-FAHM — Israeli authorities released Yousef Abu Hussein after holding him in detention for 10 days on charges of attempting to influence witnesses in the case of his brother, advocate Hussein Abu Hussein, who was arrested last month for 3 weeks.

NABLUS YOUTHS SENTENCED

NABLUS — Military court sentenced Nasser Wajih al-Rumahi and Anwar Abd al- Jalil, both from Jalazoun refugee camp, to three months in prison, three months suspended and a IS100,000 fine on security charges.

The court also sentenced Nasser Ayad and Nasser al-Ghiwayah, both from Nablus, to ten months in prison and six months suspended.

Hassan al-Talahmeh of Dura in the Hebron district was sentenced by the court to one-and-a-half months in prison, two months suspended and a IS100,000 fine on security charges.

January 7, 1985

PETROL BOMB IN NABLUS

NABLUS — A petrol bomb was thrown at an Israeli military vehicle in the centre of Nablus. Israel Radio said the bomb caused no damage or injuries.

PETROL BOMB IN DHEISHEH

DHEISHEH — Israel Radio reported that a petrol bomb was thrown at an Israeli army vehicle in Dheisheh camp.

The radio said many Israeli border police surrounded the area and launched a manhunt for the attackers.

BREIJ YOUTHS GET STIFF TERMS

GAZA — Israeli military court sentenced three youths from Breij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip on charges of throwing bombs at Israeli patrols and planning to hijack an Israeli bus.

The three are: Ahmad Mohammed Hijab, sentenced to 20 years, Hassan Ahmad Abu Armoneh, 10 years; and Subhi Darwish Zakut, 5 years.

January 8, 1984

PETROL BOMB IN SHU'FAT

JERUSALEM — A petrol bomb was thrown at an Israeli military vehicle in Shu'fat refugee camp. Five youths were detained for questioning.

SISCO IN BETHLEHEM

BETHLEHEM — Former US Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco and the US consul general in Jerusalem visited the city of Bethlehem and met with Mayor Elias Freij. They discussed the current situation in the occupied territories and the Palestinian cause.

4 YEARS FOR MOLOTOV

NABLUS — Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Tawfiq Bubali to four years in prison and four years suspended on charges of throwing a petrol bomb at an Israeli army vehicle.

APPEAL REJECTED

JERUSALEM — Advocate Ali Ghuzlan of Jerusalem appealed to Israeli authorities on behalf of his client, advocate Yasir al-Rabai of Hebron, for his release from detention.

An Israeli court in Ramallah turned down the appeal and

Students at Bir Zeit Commemorated the 20th anniversary of the founding of Fatah with a large celebration. (Story, page 3).

set Rabai's trial for January 28.

TOWN ARREST

JENIN — Israeli authorities imposed town arrest on Walid Ahmed Mahmoud Nazal of the village of Qabatya for six months. No reasons were given.

4 NABLUS YOUTHS RELEASED

NABLUS — Israeli authorities released Nimr al-Dari, Jamil Awad and Amjad Abu Sharkh. The three were held in detention for three weeks.

They also released Marwan Hazem Abu Salhah after he served a six month prison sentence on security charges.

JORDAN BARS TRAVELLING STUDENTS

TULKARM — The Jordanians have barred West Bank Palestinian students from entering Jordan via the "open bridges."

The students said the Jordanians ignored their travel papers and asked them to get Israeli travel permits good for only one month.

Press conference at the American Colony demanding an inquiry into the November 21 fatal shooting of a Bir Zeit student. From left to right: Professor Leighton Pratt, advocate Raja Shehadeh, Acting BZU President Gabi Baramki and Albert Aghazarian

Forty-five Israeli and Palestinian artists participated in an eight-day art exhibition which opened in Tel Aviv January 10. The exhibition of 70 works was entitled "Palestinian and Israeli Artists Against Occupation and for Freedom of Expression."

Settlements

continued from page 5

And, according to Peace Now, the cost of settling a Jewish family on the West Bank ranges from US$ 120,000 to US$ 150,000 — compliments of the US taxpayer.

The purpose of this book is to illustrate to Americans — and particularly to Jewish Americans — the folly of continuing a settlement policy which is illegal, potentially explosive and pragmatically useless in "solving" the "demographic problem." That some Jewish Americans have become aware of this is indicated in Chapter 6, "American Jewish Opposition to the Settlements."

Among the interesting, lesser known facts mentioned in this chapter, is the establishment, in 1973, of the short-lived *Breira* (Alternative), which was rendered ineffective in 1978 due to pressure from the organized Jewish community. More recently (March 1983), a delegation of 18 rabbis went to 15 congressional supporters of Israel, urging a halt on settlements. While this unpublicised visit does not seem to have had much result, it is one indication that the Jewish community's leadership can respond rationally to compelling evidence and break away from the framework of automatic unequivocal support for all Israeli policies. Judging by this book, many Israelis would welcome a more circumspect judgement of Israel by Americans, and a refusal to finance Israeli policies which threaten Israelis and Palestinians alike.

In Lebanon:

Resistance Escalates

Israeli war planes bombarded a Palestinian military base in the Beka'a used by the Popular Struggle Front January 9. Lebanese sources reported the planes missed their target and rockets exploded 200 metres away from the one-story building. An Israeli military spokesperson reported that Israeli planes bombarded a military base near al-Marj, 40 kilometres east of Beirut. The spokesperson said that all Israeli planes returned safely after carrying out the mission. Israeli planes attacked Palestinian and Lebanese bases in the Beka'a a total of 16 times in 1984.

Prominent figures in Sidon issued a statement January 5 and said Israeli authorities were responsible for the series of explosions in Sidon since January 3. Five booby-trapped bombs exploded and caused damage in shops. The prominent figures, including merchants and political activists, said that the Israelis are trying to destroy the local economic infrastructure.

In the south, the Lebanese national resistance escalated commando operations against Israeli forces and Lebanese collaborators. Two collaborators, Abdel Karim Atawi, the *mukhtar* of Kharoub village near Nabatiya, and Mohammed Habib Jaber, a member of the "civil guards" in south Lebanon, were shot dead. Unidentified gunmen in a passing car shot Atawi outside his home. Jaber was killed when gunmen opened fire as he was sitting near his home.

Katyusha rockets were launched against Israeli military positions in Zahrani and north of Tyre January 4 and 6. Israeli spokesmen reported no casualties. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded January 7 when Lebanese nationalist fighters opened fire at a military base near Mar Elias village east of Sidon. Israeli military troops combed the area and made arrests.

An organisation calling itself "Ghadab" (Anger) claimed responsibility for the murder of a collaborator in Ain al-Hilweh camp January 6.

Two Katyushas were shot from territory under Israeli control January 5 against an Israeli military base in south Lebanon.

Israelis Not Under WB Judicial Purview

Ramallah's prosecutor general received a notice dated December 6 from Pinhas Levy, the Israeli military officer in charge of the judiciary in the West Bank, informing him that West Bank civil courts have no judicial purview over "holders of Israeli identity cards" in criminal and traffic cases.

According to the note, written in reference to a previous circular no. 63/3 dated January 11, 1979, West Bank civil courts are "not permitted to execute judgments against holders of Israeli identity cards who live in Israel (including Jerusalem and its environs)." The note continued, "In order to avoid problems of this sort, courts are forbidden to permit the filing of any criminal case, including traffic violations against holders of Israeli identity cards... without my written permission."

Ramallah's prosecutor general, Farid Musleh, told *Al Fajr* that this military circular applies only to criminal and traffic cases and does not include law suits filed by individuals or companies. He said, however, that even in criminal cases in the past the military judiciary officer occasionally gives West Bank courts permission to prosecute individuals. He did not expect the new notice to change this situation, and pointed out that criminal prosecution of Israelis was possible — given that prior permission was obtained.

Ramallah attorney Nabil Mushahwar, formerly a judge, did not agree with Musleh's assessment. He said that in all his years in Ramallah courts, he had never seen any Israeli being tried before them. He said because Arab judges want to avoid trouble, they heed military circulars even though these circulars are not as legally binding as military orders. He said the circular "violates the order and spirit of modern laws." Current laws specify that criminal acts committed in any place should be tried by courts in the region where the crime was committed. If an Israeli citizen violates the law in Ramallah, he said, he should be tried in a Ramallah court.

Mushahwar added that the Israeli circular clearly violated article seven of the Jordanian law which also calls for trials in the region where the crime was perpetrated. He believes that the new arrangements as specified in Levy's notice is intended to protect Israeli citizens from being tried by Arab courts.

It will give Israelis, particularly settlers, more freedom to commit violence against Arabs in the occupied territories because they know they will receive lenient sentences from Israeli courts for perpetrating crimes against Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza.

Mushahwar said he believes Arab courts should appeal the unofficial order and refuse to accept its provisions.

1984 in Retrospect

We continue this week the review of the second half of events of 1984 regarding Palestinians under occupation as they appeared in local newspapers.

A Bir Zeit University student, Mohammed Abu Oraf, receiving treatment at Ramallah General Hospital for wounds received during a demonstration on BZU's old campus, November 21, Inset: Sharaf al-Tibi, another BZU student, was killed by Israeli army bullets during the same demonstration.

July

July 2 — A journalist's home in Dheisheh refugee camp was burned.

July 3 — Soldiers shot 5 youths who were part of a summer bus outing at a Dheisheh roadblock.

July 26 — Two resistance fighters residents of Lebanon were sentenced to 25 years in prison.

July 30 — Israeli military authorities raided a cultural exhibit at Najah National University in Nablus and closed the university for four months.

August

August 1 — Students of the Modern Community College at Beitunia struck in protest of harassment by village leaguers.

August 4 — Um al-Fahm residents marched against racism and Meir Kahane's programme to evict Arabs.

August 7 — 800 prisoners in Jnaid prison held a limited hunger strike to protest maltreatment.

August 7 — Settlers bulldozed an Arab home near Gilo settlement in the West Bank.

August 8 — Jewish settlers founded a new settlement in Hebron cemetery.

August 10 — Israeli soldier found dead in Ya'abad orchard.

August 15 — The Israeli Electric Company annexed the Nablus electric company's western concession area to its own grid despite local objections.

August 15 — 20,000 Palestinians from all over the country attended the inauguration of Nazareth's voluntary work camp.

August 19 — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded a Palestinian youth from Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

August 26 — The Higher Islamic Committee protested the raising of Israeli flag within al-Aqsa compound as a violation of religious rights.

August 28 — Settlers disregarded court order and levelled privately owned farm land in Deir Istia.

August 29 — 10,000 people gathered in Um al-Fahm to prevent racist rabbi Meir Kahane's entrance.

September

September 1 — Palestinian youths bulldozed open the entrance to Kalandia camp, north of Jerusalem, which had been blockaded by the military.

September 4 — Soldiers destroyed the Arab-owned Jerusalem Electricity company power sub-station in Ain-Sultan, a largely abandoned refugee camp outside Jericho.

September 10 — Bethlehem labour union leader, George Hazboun, was put under town arrest for six months.

September 12 — Two new Israeli settlements were established in the West Bank as a unity government took power in Israel.

September 17 — Sabra and Shatila massacres were commemmorated locally with demonstrations and protest rallies.

September 17 — An Israeli bus on its way to Kiryat Arba settlement was attacked by Palestinians in the Solomon Pools area near Bethlehem. Five Israelis and two Palestinians were wounded.

September 22 — Three bombs planted by Jewish terrorists in Jerusalem's Old City wounded four Palestinians. An Israeli soldier later confessed to the sabotage.

September 23 — 800 Jnaid prisoners began an open hunger strike to protest severe prison conditions. The strike ended October 4 after prison authorities promised improvements in basic conditions.

October

October 1 — Arab local councils in Israel struck over discriminatory budgeting.

October 2 — Soldiers raided a BZU board of trustees meeting and arrested a student council member.

October 3 — Israeli military sealed seven of the nine remaining entrances to Dheisheh refugee camp as a collective punishment measure.

October 9 — Settlers staged patrols on road in front of Dheisheh refugee camp to punish stone-throwers.

October 10 — A Jabalya camp youth was shot by a soldier for not halting on command.

October 11 — Military authorities again placed Bassam Shaka'a under 24-hour surveillance.

October 16 — Jewish settlers vandalised two houses in Balatta refugee camp.

October 18 — The centre of Hebron was closed by settlers for their observance of Jewish holiday Yom Kippur.

October 24 — Israeli authorities revealed they arrested Ali Khalil Rabai, a Hebron resident and senior Fatah military officer, one month before. Rabai hid successfully from Israeli authorities for 14 years.

October 28 — One Palestinian labourer was killed and 11 wounded when an Israeli soldier fired a LAW rocket at a bus leaving Jerusalem.

November

November 1 — Israeli authorities shut Bethlehem University for four days after three days of demonstrations.

November 1 — Israeli authorities destroyed 33 houses of migrant farmers in Jiftlik Valley.

November 5 — A general one-day-strike, called by the Islamic Higher Council was observed in the occupied territories to protest continued Israeli army presence at al-Aqsa.

November 6 — A Palestinian farmer from Jib used his bulldozers to fight settlers' land grab.

November 7 — Dheisheh students held a sit-in outside the closed entrances to Dheisheh refugee camp.

November 13 — Army sealed Dheisheh camp and declared it a closed military area for two days.

November 21 — Israeli troops shot into a peaceful demonstration in support of the PNC at BZU. Sharaf al-Tibi, one of the nine injured students, died enroute to hospital at a military roadblock. Al-Tibi was the first BZU student to be killed by Israeli soldiers.

November 21 — Israeli soldiers opened fire on a Ramallah demonstratoin and killed a labourer, Bakr Ali Abdallah.

November 22 — The 17th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) opened in Amman. The session lasted eight days and ended by reconfirming Yasir Arafat's leadership.

November 29 — Palestinians marked the 37th anniversary of the UN partition plan by demonstrations.

December

December 6 — Israelis detained Um al-Fahm lawyer Hussein Abu Hussein on trumped up political charges. He was held two-and-a-half weeks and released.

December 11 — 1380 dunums confiscated from three villages in Ramallah area.

December 13 — New PLO executive committee met in Tunsia for the first time to distribute posts.

December 15 — Hadassah hospital began foresting a 25-dunum plot belonging to Isawiyeh village.

December 16 — Israelis approved a new hospital for Hebron.

December 19 — West Bankers formed an ad hoc committee to protest Israeli Road Plan No. 50 which obliterates large swaths of agricultural land, businesses, homes and refugee camps.